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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
GRADUATE SCHOOL  
Elements of Personnel Administration

SUMMARY

By  
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This is a course in personnel training, studying the elements of personnel administration. Advanced classes in the School are studying the techniques of supervision, which comprise one of these elements. In both series much of the material has been presented by persons who are personnel administrators or specialists in industry or in government, and by some who have been both. The material given in both courses, elementary and advanced, seems to be very much alike. In general, the matter presented before both groups tends to be on the level of the advanced course.

The Components of Personnel Administration

Let us ask ourselves a question. What are the components of personnel administration? Search has been made in vain through the lectures of last year and this, so far as available, for a statement of this preliminary concept. Presumably they are the following:

1. The employing agency and the jobs it offers;
2. The employes and their training, personalities, and attitudes;
3. The supervisors and their training, personalities, and attitudes;
4. The principles and techniques of supervision;
5. The inter-relations of all of these; and
6. The problems of human reactions produced by these inter-relations.

That sounds like a large order for a freshmen semester.

The formulation of this concept of the components of personnel administration immediately raises other questions in our minds. What are the basic principles of personnel administration? What are the objectives of personnel training? Personnel is used here to include both the supervised and the supervisors. What is supervision? What are the techniques of supervision? What are the problems which make proper techniques of supervision necessary and the study of them important? Most of these topics have been discussed, more or less fully, by one or another of the lecturers in this course. Some of them have not been presented at all.

Principles of Personnel Administration

A principle is merely a fundamental or general truth. Principles of personnel administration have been mentioned by several of the specialists who have addressed the class in this semester or during last year. So far as can be discovered, however, no one of them has formulated or



stated a single principle. It seems exceedingly important that a beginning class should have the basic principles of the subject set forth. There has been no time to review the literature of the subject and to determine what others have done. Your speaker has taken the liberty, therefore, of formulating a series containing what seem to be the fundamental principles underlying the administration of personnel. This has been done hastily and without time for revision. No claim can be made either for completeness or final accuracy. They should be of suggestive value.

1. Personnel is the most important and most expensive part of the equipment of any organization or enterprise, commercial or governmental.

2. All equipment and material except personnel is susceptible of standardization as to quality and the performance to be expected.

3. The cost of personnel makes its efficient administration imperative and the inability to standardize it constitutes a major problem in devising techniques of efficient administration.

4. The size and complexity of the problem warrants the assigning of the best available minds and personalities to the task.

5. Personalities rather than technical inabilities are at the bottom of most recognized personnel problems.

6. Abilities may be increased by organized training, either before or after entering on the job.

7. Personalities are susceptible of modification, for either better or worse, and personality problems warrant the application of the most carefully considered techniques.

8. Personality varies as between individuals and often varies markedly within the same individual from hour to hour, or day to day, or year to year, or from one period in life to another.

9. Realization of the social values of project objectives is a powerful builder of morale and incentive to efficiency.

10. Efficiency is the product of trained ability and established morale into self-controlled or self-disciplined personality.

11. Inadequate training and ineffective personalities are relatively as common among the supervisors as among the supervised.

12. Training of supervisors and prospective supervisors in personnel administration is of the highest importance, as the individual supervisor is more likely to influence production than is the individual supervised worker.



### Objectives of Personnel Training

Dr. Greene, in his discussion of employe training, names 7 objectives, as follows:

1. To reduce expenses by reducing the learning period.
2. To cultivate proper attitudes and techniques.
3. To build morale through increasing the interest.
4. To discover potential abilities and so reduce turnover.
5. To obviate errors, complaints, and reduced production.
6. To develop interested, intelligent efficiency.
7. To prepare personnel for promotion to more responsible jobs.

To these, I would add an eighth, especially for government employes, as follows:

8. To develop an appreciation of the opportunities and obligations in public service.

These objectives are not mutually exclusive. For instance, shortening the learning period is not the only objective that reduces expense. The first 6 all do that. Similarly, other objectives than increasing the interest serve to build morale.

Objective 8, appreciation of obligations in public service, is peculiarly the privilege of governmental employes, at all four levels of government. They, as no other group of workers, are entitled to feel that they are directly serving the people of America.

### Techniques of Supervision

Supervision, or management, is defined by Farquhar as the science and art of so arranging personnel matters of work and responsibility as to make an organization run without apparent supervision.

When chief of a certain division of the department, the present speaker was wont to say that his division ran just as well when he was away from Washington as when he was here. Cautious friends feared that if that opinion got to the ears of higher administrators, they might consider the Division Chief an unnecessary expense. But the division would not have continued to grow and develop new services unless he, or some other, had had free time for thinking out the future program as well as keeping an eye on present problems.

Techniques are methods. Techniques of supervision, then, are the methods by which organizations are made to function efficiently. These techniques comprise two distinct but completely inter-related parts. Paraphrasing and amplifying Farquhar, these are:

1. Mechanics. The tangible physical environment, or the conditions, aids, and facilities which surround and permeate the daily activities of workers.



2. Humanics. The intangible but no less real and important human relations between individuals and the reactions these relations produce. These relations may be those between subordinate and superior, so-called, or between coordinates.

It will be observed that the objectives of personnel training, previously listed, all belong in one or the other of these two groups.

### Problems of Personnel Administration

Every lecture to which we have listened has presented one or several of the many individual problems of personnel management. They seem almost numberless. At nearly every session, we have discussed a specific case or problem. The general impression gained by your speaker is that we have not gotten very far with those problem cases. An attempt has been made to analyze the reason for this result, if indeed this has been the result.

Two conclusions have been reached. We seem to have attempted to discuss cases before obtaining sufficient information on principles and techniques of administration. The problem cases also seem to have been presented without sufficient detailed information to permit analysis and to make suggestions for remedy possible. These conclusions are no reflection on any one. We all, directors, teachers, and pupils alike, are feeling our ways into new and little-known fields. Better methods are bound to develop.

Two suggestions are made for consideration in organizing future courses. Defer any consideration of specific problems until the components of personnel administration, the principles of personnel management, the objectives of employee training, and the techniques of supervision have been presented and assimilated. Create a small Committee on personnel problems, to which shall be submitted in advance the outlines of specific problems intended for discussion in class, in order that they may be presented with such completeness of essential facts that judgment is possible and solutions may be recommended.

The majority of the problems of personnel management are just the age-old problems of human relations. This has been stressed in different ways in most of the lectures. They are the problems of life, in its every aspect, and not merely the problems of official personnel relations. They are the problems of the home, the school, the church, and of every social and technical organization. They likewise are the problems of the city, the State, the nation, and the world.

Personnel problems are the problems of human aspirations and frustrations of human understandings and misunderstandings, of human tolerances and intolerances, and of human sympathies and resentments. They are problems arising both in the supervisors and the supervised. They are problems of the tangible conditions and of the less tangible personalities.



Dr. Thelma Hunt, of George Washington University, in her lecture on psychology, laid down certain procedures on which good management depends. The first one was the proper selection of the supervisor. Dr. Leonard D. White, of the U. S. Civil Service Commission, in the introductory lecture last year, classified supervisors into three types. These were the military or martinet type, the blustering industrial foremen type, and what he called the leadership type. Dr. Hunt also presented a list of proper personnel procedures for administrators, as given by Smith in his Psychology for Executives.

The problem of the employee has been discussed by all speakers. Dr. Hunt's second requirement was the proper selection of the employee and Farquhar admits that the selected Federal personnel is superior. Dr. Hunt, however, stressed the need for a knowledge of the deviation in individuals. Dr. Reichard, in his out-reaching lecture on psychiatry, opened by the whole vista of distorted personalities, showing us that each is the product of heredity and environmental experience, and of the individual behavior reactions toward these two.

Dr. Stockberger, in his summary of the course given last year, referred to these as problems of personal administration rather than personnel administration. He defined personal administration as "the control which an individual exercises, or should exercise, over his own actions, attitudes, and relations to others."

This is what used to be called self-discipline. The term now is sadly out of fashion. Is it more than a coincidence that we now are dealing, in personnel matters, with the first generation of adults who, as children, were reared on the theory that self expression and not self discipline was the basis of normal development. Few wish to discipline themselves. Witness the increase of juvenile crime. Many wish to discipline others. Witness the eruption of the Ku Klux Klan a score of years ago and the recent rise of the Black Legion. These are but the extreme manifestations of a wide-spread and deep-rooted attitude of intolerance, to the point of murder. The daily cartoon of Little Orphan Annie on Sunday, May 31, following Memorial Day, illustrates the popular trend. The man who failed to doff his hat as the colors passed was mobbed and beaten. But the man was wholly within his rights as a citizen.

#### Governmental vs. Commercial Employment

Farquhar has pointed out the similarities and differences between governmental employment, primarily under civil service, and commercial employment. Concerning the similarity of the individuals comprising both services, he says "that their methods and habits are much the same, that they have the same desires, abilities, aspirations, inhibitions, and shortcomings, and that they respond to leadership or lack of it in the same way."

He then presents a list of personnel conditions which he regards as more firmly ingrained and more fully developed in governmental than in most private business. These are:



1. Job specifications. Classified and standardized through years of experience by the Civil Service Commission.
2. Careful selection of personnel, resulting in a superior quality and therefore more pleasant and helpful associations.
3. Standard rates of pay for similar positions. Fairer, more impartial, and more adequate than in private employ.
4. Good working conditions, certainly far above those generally found in industry.
5. Standardized methods of separation from the service, known to all employees and not arbitrarily applied.
6. A measure of security far in excess of anything that private industry has so far offered.
7. A status which is definite and also within our power to raise.

Farquhar urged a frank recognition and appreciation of the advantages in governmental service, not to make us complacent but to deepen our sense of opportunity and obligation to the service. This was what your present speaker presented as the 8th objective in personnel training. We are working for the welfare, the happiness, the more abundant life, of all the men, women, and children of America. We are not building the wealth of a corporation but the welfare of a people. They pay us, out of hard-wrung taxes, and must be content with less of comfort and possession that we have. We owe them much.

In the Federal service, we feel that we have a right to expect the five things which Farquhar stressed as tangible aids to good supervision. Those were: Proper introduction to the job, fitting and training in the job. Definite instruction where instruction is needed, adequate measurement of performance, and sufficient incentive. The last named have just been referred to in connection with the thought that we labor for the welfare of the people of America.

One other aspect of the personnel problem is that of employee representation, which looms so large in the industrial world just now. In the Federal service, that is provided for in several ways. Slocombe, in his discussion of the subject, named three methods, namely, through recognized trade union, through an employee representation plan, and through organized group conference. All of these are possible and actual in the Federal service.

A word on employee attitudes toward the service. Most of the employee activities, whether as individuals, as unit groups, or as organizations, have been directed toward getting some benefit for themselves. This is proper, within proper limits. But there would seem to be both opportunity and obligation for them to seek as earnestly for ways of bettering the service in which they are engaged. There a real danger that, because their publications and the press reports of their conventions, carry only the story of their efforts to better themselves, the public as well as the Congress will come to regard them as entirely self-seeking. It may be possible that had they bent all their efforts to improving the service, these other things might have been added to them



even more rapidly than has been true. It is worth thinking about.

Finally, a word on the public attitude toward government service. You may be surprised to know that it is distinctly held in disrespect by the great majority of the citizens of the country. That is a challenge to us to so work and act as to change that attitude to one of respect and esteem.



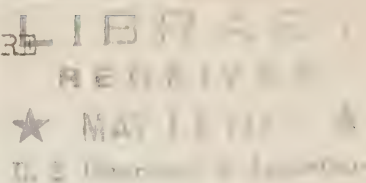
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PERSONNEL PROBLEM, NO. 1

(For Discussion, April 17.)



An employee has been in Government Service 12 years; in her present position 5 years. She is capable of painstaking work at a moderate rate of speed. Her output for the past year or so, however, has lessened appreciably in quantity, and she informs her fellow workers that "'only a new broom sweeps clean' - why should we do more than a minimum?"

She is CAF-4 and apparently in good health. How can her attitude be improved?

DISCUSSION

In the discussion do not just express personal opinion but try to relate what you say to something fundamental given in one of the first three lectures. Each lecture has touched directly upon the problem represented by this case. Try to analyze what was said and the attitude this case represents and relate the two.

1. Does that fundamental principle of human behavior discussed by Dr. Williams apply? In what way or how? Do you think her immediate superior is or is not familiar with this principle? Why? Did Williams in any way suggest a solution? What?

2. Likewise let us try to find a solution (that is, something that would improve the situation) in the lecture of Dr. Mosher.

3. What incentive discussed by Dr. Fisher do you think you could apply in this case to improve the employee's morale, her output, and also the pleasure she derives from her job?

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"I feel that the work, the job, plays a part in man's spiritual and social life, because it represents a well-marked, well-defined ladder of importance, so that if a man gets up to having that kind of job, he can be sure that he is that much better than the man who has the lower job. He finds it is an honor in being able to say 'that is the kind of man I am because that is the kind of job that I can do'. In America this hierarchy of work and work improvements and work skills offers a sort of ladder in which the citizen has the chance by means of concentrating on his job, a chance to get definite assurance of a certain distinction from this vague cipher of insignificance. It offers a ladder; but it also offers a platform for maintaining all his respect." - Whiting Williams.

"The thing which quickens a man's step, which gives his step a spring, and the feeling of satisfaction when he gets done his work, is that he is pulling together with his fellow workers toward a common and worthwhile goal. This is the primary purpose of good personnel management; it is something that is not measurable. It is something that calls for leadership, and not domination; it is something which doesn't depend upon fear." - Dr. Mosher.







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PERSONNEL PROBLEM, NO. 2

(For Discussion, April 24)

The organization is a new one. The unit includes ten clerks, all of same grade, and is responsible to a Business Office. It devotes a considerable part of time to WPA liaison records.

The Supervisor is a young woman with pleasing personality, with social service training and experience, but with little training or experience in business or agriculture.

DISCUSSION

1. Is a clerk justified in taking a small amount of graduate school work, with or without informing his supervisor that he is doing so, when he knows that the supervisor feels that any such study prevents one from doing his full duty by his job?

2. When there are several projects, periodic reports, and jobs being cared for in the office and a clerk spends the greater part of his time on one of these, but assists at times in recording or checking, etc., on any or all of the others, is he justified in making inquiries about methods or objectives concerning these jobs? The attitude of the supervisor towards these inquiries is: "That is So-and-so's job. It's none of your business how or why it is done the way it is done."

3.\* To what extent may one seek another position without first discussing the matter with the supervisor?

- (a) Consult the Personnel Officer of one's own organization?
- (b) Consult the Personnel Officer of other Bureaus?
- (c) Consult heads of divisions where there might be an opportunity for a clerk with specialized training?

4. After a rather casual conversation concerning the admittedly deplorable state of the files (there is no file clerk in the office), the supervisor said she would be glad to have some suggestions as to how they could be improved. Clerk, upon arriving for work a few days later, handed her a list of suggestions. With a hasty glance at the first of these suggestions she at once began explaining (in the presence of other clerks) why the change was not feasible. Later in the day Supervisor introduced subject again, defending method in use. A week later, called clerk to leave work and observe how much more efficiently (?) a clerk was compiling information than would have been possible under the system suggested by the clerk.

- (a) What, if anything, was wrong with the clerk's method of presenting his suggestions?
- (b) Should clerk volunteer any further suggestions, either on the subject of files, or any similar subject?

(Over)



5. One clerk reports on time each morning, spreads his work on his desk, and leaves for 25 or 30 minutes.

(a) What, if anything, should the supervisor do about it?

(b) If a present clerk should become head of the unit, how should he handle the situation, if nothing has been done in the meantime?

\*Please reserve number three for later discussion.

In discussing the other questions please relate your statements directly to some statement made in one of the lectures. Each student taking the course for credit will be expected to be prepared to discuss each of the four questions.

P. Keplinger, Course Chairman.



GRADUATE SCHOOL  
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
Elements of Personnel Administration

Lesson 2

Last week we gave you a common personnel case and asked you to answer three questions about it. The same type of case was referred to in the lecture. It answered the first two questions; the third it answered only in part. This week we take another step toward the complete answer. Also we are having mimeographed for you some of the answers turned in.

In addition we are giving you another common personnel case; not quite so common as the other but still, I think, common enough that either you or some one you know will have experienced the same situation in a greater or a lesser degree.

Read the following extract from "Scientific Foundation of Business Administration" first, then read the case, answer the questions, and hand in your answers next week.

Other references that you may want to read are:

Organization Engineering by Henry Dennison, Page 29 to 46.

A Personnel Program for the Federal Civil Service by Herman Feldman, pages 160 to 163.

The Art of Leadership by Ordway Tead, Chapter 10.

Psychology for Executives by Elliott Dunlap Smith, Chapter 7.

The giving of Orders by M. P. Follett.

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THE GIVING OF ORDERS

by

M. P. Follett

The chief thing I have to say to you this month is that I wish we could all take a responsible attitude toward our experience - a conscious and responsible attitude. Let us take one of the many activities of the business man, and see what it would mean to take a responsible attitude toward our experience in regard to that one thing. I am going to take the question of giving orders: what are the principles underlying the different ways of giving orders, which of these principles have you decided to follow? Most people have not decided, have not even thought out what the different principles are. Yet we all give orders every day.



Surely this is a pity. To know what principles may underlie any given activity of ours is to take a conscious attitude toward our experience. The second step is to take a responsible attitude, by deciding, after we have recognized the different principles, which ones we will follow. In the matter of giving orders, I wish we might all of us decide now, if we have not already done so, on the way we think orders should be given. We shall not arrive at the same conclusions, there may be a good deal of difference of opinion among us. What I urge is not that you adopt my principles, but that you stop to think what principles you are acting on or what principles you intend to act on in this matter, and then try giving orders in accordance with those principles as far as the methods of your firm permit.

And next I urge you to note results; for our first decision should be tentative. We should try experiments and note whether they succeed or fail and, most important of all, why they succeed or fail. This is taking an experimental attitude toward experience. We have then three steps: (1) a conscious attitude - realize the principles which it is possible to act on in this matter; (2) a responsible attitude - decide which we will act on; (3) an experimental attitude - try experiments and watch results. We might add a fourth step: pool our results.

To some men the matter of giving orders seems a very simple affair; they expect to issue their orders and have them obeyed without question. Yet, on the other hand, the shrewd common sense of many a business executive has shown him that the issuing of orders is surrounded by many difficulties; that to demand an unquestioning obedience to orders not approved, not perhaps even understood, is bad business policy. Moreover, psychology, as well as our own observation, shows us not only that you cannot get people to do things most satisfactorily by ordering them or exhorting them; but also that even reasoning with them, even convincing them intellectually, may not be enough. Even the "consent of the governed" will not do all the work it is supposed to do, an important consideration for those who are advocating employee representation. Therefore it will do little good merely to get intellectual agreement; unless you change the habit-patterns of people, you have not really changed your people. Business administration, industrial organization, should build up certain habit-patterns, that is, certain mental attitudes. One of my trade union friends told me that he remembered when he was a quite small boy hearing his father, who worked in a shoe-shop, railing daily against his boss. So he grew up believing that it was inherent in the nature of things that the workman should be against his employer.

If we analyze this matter a little further we shall see that we have to do three things, I am now going to use psychological language: (1) build up certain attitudes; (2) provide for the release of these attitudes; (3) augment the released response as it is being carried out. What does this mean in the language of business? A psychologist has given us the example of the salesman. The salesman first creates in you the attitude that you want his article; then, at just the "psychological" moment, he produces his contract blank which you may sign and thus release that attitude; then if, as you are preparing to sign some one comes in and tells you how pleased he has been with his purchase of this article, that augments the response which is being released.

If we apply this to the subject of orders and obedience, we see that people can obey an order only if previous habit-patterns are appealed to or new ones created. When the employer is considering an order, he should also be thinking of the way to form the habits which will ensure its being carried out. We should first lead the salesman selling shoes or the bank clerk cashing checks to see the desirability of a different method. Then the rules of the store or bank should be so changed as to make it possible for salesman or cashier to adopt the new method. In the third place they could be made more ready to follow the new method by convincing in advance some one individual who will set an example to the others. You can usually convince one or two or three ahead of the rank and file. This last step you all know from your experience to be good tactics; it is what the psychologists call intensifying the attitude to be released. But we find that the released attitude is not by one release fixed as a habit; it takes a good many responses to do that. It has been hard for many old-fashioned employers to understand that orders will not take the place of training. I want to italicize that. Many a time an employer has been angry because, as he expressed it, a workman "wouldn't" do so and so, when the truth of the matter was that the workman couldn't, actually couldn't, do as ordered because he could not go contrary to life-long habits. This whole subject might be taken up under the heading of education, for there we could give many instances of the attempt to make arbitrary authority take the place of training. In history, the aftermath of all revolutions shows us the results of the lack of training.

In this matter of prepared-in-advance behavior patterns, that is, in preparing the way for the reception of orders, psychology makes a contribution when it points out that the same words often rouse in us a quite different response when heard in certain places and on certain occasions. A boy may respond differently to the same suggestion when made by his teacher and when made by his schoolmate. Moreover, he may respond differently to the same suggestion made by the teacher in the schoolroom and made by the teacher when they are taking a walk together. Applying this to the giving of orders, we see that the place in which orders are given, the circumstances under which they are given, may make all the difference in the world as to the response which we get. Hand them down a long way from President or Works Manager and the effect is weakened. One might say that the strength of favorable response to an order is in inverse ratio to the distance the order travels.

Psychology has another important contribution to make on this subject of issuing orders or giving directions: before the integration can be made between order-giver and order-receiver, there is often an integration to be made within one or both of the individuals concerned. There are often two dissociated paths in the individual, if you are clever enough to recognize these you can sometimes forestall a Freudian conflict, make the integration appear before there is an acute stage. To explain what I mean, let me run over briefly a social worker's case. The girl's parents had been divorced and the girl placed with a jolly, easy going, slack and untidy family, consisting of the father and mother and eleven children, sons and daughters. Gracie was very happy here,



but when the social worker in charge of the case found that the living conditions involved a good deal of promiscuity, she thought the girl should be placed elsewhere. She therefore took her to call on an aunt who had a home with some refinement of living, where they had "high tastes," as one of the family said. This aunt wished to have Gracie live with her, and Gracie decided that she would like to do so. The social worker, however, in order to test her, said, "But I thought you were so happy where you are." "Can't I be happy and high, too?" the girl replied. There were two wishes here, you see. The social worker by removing the girl to the aunt may have forestalled a Freudian conflict, the dissociated paths may have been united. I do not know the outcome of this story, but it indicates a method of dealing with our co-directors - make them "happy and high, too."

Business administration has often to consider how to deal with the dissociated paths in individuals or groups, but the methods of doing this successfully have been developed much further in some departments than in others. We have as yet hardly recognized this as part of the technique of dealing with employees, yet the clever salesman knows that it is the chief part of his job. The prospective buyer wants the article and does not want it. The able salesman does not suppress the arguments in the mind of the purchaser against buying, for then the purchaser might be sorry afterwards for his purchase, and that would not be good salesmanship. Unless he can unite, integrate, in the purchaser's mind, the reasons for buying and the reasons for not buying, his future sales will be imperilled, he will not be the highest grade salesman.

Please note that this goes beyond what the psychologist whom I quoted at the beginning of this section told us. He said, "The salesman must create in you the attitude that you want his article." Yes, but only if he creates this attitude by integration not by suppression.

Apply all this to orders. An order often leaves the individual to whom it is given with two dissociated paths; an order should seek to unite, to integrate, dissociated paths. Court decisions often settle arbitrarily which of two ways is to be followed without showing a possible integration of the two, that is, the individual is often left with an internal conflict on his hands. This is what both courts and business administration should try to prevent, the internal conflicts of individuals or groups.

In discussing the preparation for giving orders, I have not spoken at all of the appeal to certain instincts made so important by many writers. Some writers, for instance, emphasize the instinct of self-assertion; this would be violated by too rigid orders or too clumsily-exercised authority. Other writers, of equal standing, tell us that there is an instinct of submission to authority.

There is much more that we could learn from psychology about the forming of habits and the preparation for giving orders than I can even hint at now. But there is one point, already spoken of by implication, that I wish to consider more explicitly, namely, the manner of giving orders. Probably more industrial trouble has been caused by

the manner in which orders are given than in any other way. In the Report on Strikes and Lockouts, a British Government Publication, the cause of a number of strikes is given as "alleged harassing conduct of the foreman," "alleged tyrannical conduct of an under-foreman," "alleged overbearing conduct of officials." The explicit statement, however, of the tyranny of superior officers as the direct cause of strikes is I should say, unusual, yet resentment smolders and breaks out in other issues.

What happens to a man, in a man, when an order is given in a disagreeable manner, by foreman, head of department, his immediate superior in store, bank or factory? The man addressed feels that his self-respect is attacked, that one of his most inner sanctuaries is invaded. He loses his temper or becomes sullen or is on the defensive; he begins thinking of his "rights" - a fatal attitude for any of us. In the language we have been using, the wrong behavior pattern is aroused, the wrong motor-set; that is, he is now "set" to act in a way which is not going to benefit the enterprise in which he is engaged.

There is a more subtle psychological point here too; the more you are "bossed" the more your activity of thought will take place within the bossing-pattern, and your part in that pattern seems usually to be opposition to the bossing.

Now what is our problem here? How can we avoid the two extremes: too great bossism in giving orders, and practically no orders given? I am going to ask how you are avoiding these extremes. My solution is to depersonalize the giving of orders, to unite all concerned in a study of the situation, to discover the law of the situation and obey that. Until we do this I do not think we shall have the most successful administration. This is what does take place, what has to take place, when there is a question between two men in positions of equal authority. The head of the sales departments does not give orders to the head of the production department, or vice versa. Each studies the market and the final decision is made as the market demands. This is, ideally, what should take place between foremen and rank and file, between any head and his subordinates. One person should not give orders to another person, but both should agree to take their orders from the situation. If orders are simply part of the situation, the question of some one giving and some one receiving does not come up. Both accept the orders given by the situation. Employers accept the orders given by the situation; employees accept the orders given by the situation. This gives, does it not? a slightly different aspect to the whole of administration through the entire department.

We have here, I think, one of the largest contributions of scientific management: it tends to depersonalize orders. From one point of view one might call the essence of scientific management the attempt to find the law of the situation. With scientific management the managers are as much under orders as the workers, for both obey the law of the situation. Our job is not how to get people to obey orders, but how to devise methods by which we can best discover the order integral to a particular situation. When that is found, the employee



can issue it to the employer, as well as employer to employee. This often happens easily and naturally. My cook or my stenographer points out the law of the situation, and I, if I recognize it as such, accept it, even although it may reverse some "order" I have given.

Of course we should exercise authority, but always the authority of the situation. I do not say that we have found the way to a frictionless existence, far from it, but we now understand the place which we mean to give to friction. We intend to set it to work for us as the engineer does when he puts the belt over the pulley. There will be just as much, probably more, room for disagreement in the method I am advocating. The situation will often be seen differently, often be interpreted differently. But we shall know what to do with it, we shall have found a method of dealing with it.

There is much psychology, modern psychology particularly, which tends to divorce person and situation. What I am referring to is the present zest for "personality studies." When some difficulty arises we often hear the psychologist whose specialty is personality studies say, "Study the psychology of that man." And this is very good advice, but only if at the same time we study the entire situation. To leave out the whole situation, however, is so common a blunder in the studies of these psychologists that it constitutes a serious weakness in their work. And as those of you who are personnel directors have more to do, I suppose, with those psychologists who have taken personality for their specialty than with any others, I wish you would watch and see how often you find that this limitation detracts from the value of their conclusions.

I said above that we should substitute for the long-distance order the face-to-face suggestion. I think we can now see a more cogent reason for this than the one then given. It is not the face-to-face suggestion that we want so much as the joint study of the problem, and such joint study can be made best by the employee and his immediate superior, or employee and special expert on that question.

A girl working in a factory said to me, "We had a course in psychology last winter, and I see now that you have to be pretty careful how you put things to the managers if you want them to consider favorably what you're asking for." If this prepared-in-advance idea were all that the psychologists think it, it would have to be printed privately as secret doctrine. But the truth is that the best preparation for integration in the matter of orders or in anything else, is a joint study of the situation. We should not try to create the attitude we want, although that is the usual phrase, but the attitude required for cooperative study and decision. This holds good even for the salesman.

I spoke last week of the importance of changing some of the language of personnel relations. We considered whether the words "grievances," "complaints," or Ford's "trouble specialists" did not arouse the wrong behavior-patterns. I think "order" certainly does. If that word is not to mean any longer external authority, arbitrary authority, but the law of the situation, then we need a new word for it.

It is often the order that people resent as much as the thing ordered. People do not like to be ordered even to take a holiday. I have often seen instances of this. The wish to govern one's own life is of course one of the most fundamental feelings in every human being. To call this "the instinct of self-assertion," "the instinct of initiative," does not express it wholly. I think it is told in the life of some famous American that when he was a boy and his mother said, "Go get a pail of water," he always replied, "I won't," before taking up the pail and fetching the water. This is significant; he resented the command, the command of a person; but he went and got the water, not, I believe, because he had to, but because he recognized the demand of the situation. That, he knew he had to obey; that, he was willing to obey. And this kind of obedience is not opposed to the wish to govern one's self, but each is involved in the other; both are part of the same fundamental urge at the root of one's being. We have here something far more profound than "the egoistic impulse" or "the instinct of self-assertion." We have the very essence of the human being.

This subject of orders had led us into the heart of the whole question of authority and consent. When we conceive of authority and consent as parts of an inclusive situation, does that not throw a flood of light on this question? The point of view here presented gets rid of several dilemmas which have seemed to puzzle people in dealing with consent. The feeling of being "under" someone, of "subordination," of "servility," of being "at the will of another," comes out again and again in the Shop Stewards movement and in the testimony before the Coal Commission. One man said before the Coal Commission, "It is all right to work with anyone; what is disagreeable is to feel too distinctly that you are working under anyone."

Very closely connected with this is the matter of pride in one's work. If an order goes against what the craftsman or the clerk thinks is the way of doing his work which will bring the best results, he is justified in not wishing to obey that order. Could not that difficulty be met by a joint study of the situation? It is said that it is characteristic of the British workman to feel, "I know my job and won't be told how." The peculiarities of the British workman might be met by a joint study of the situation, it being understood that he probably has more to contribute to that study than anyone else.

There is another dilemma which has to be met by everyone who is in what is called a position of authority: how can you expect people merely to obey orders and at the same time to take that degree of responsibility which they should take? Indeed, in my experience, the people who enjoy following orders blindly, without any thought of their own part, are those who like thus to get rid of responsibility.

I think one of the gravest problems before us is how to make the reconciliation between receiving orders and taking responsibility. And I think the reconciliation can be made through our conception of the law of the situation.



I have spoken of several dilemmas: how to take orders and yet not to be "under" someone, how to take orders and yet to keep one's pride in one's work, how to take orders and yet to have a share in responsibility. There is still another dilemma troubling many people which our present point of view helps to solve, namely, whether you can have obedience and liberty. That group of political scientists and guild socialists who are denying the power of the state, say that we cannot have obedience and liberty. I think they are wholly wrong, but I think we should ask ourselves to what we owe obedience. Surely only to a functional unity of which we are a part, to which we are contributing. I agree with the guild socialists that the state is not that now. Those who are concerned with the reorganization of industry should take warning from the failures of the state.

This brings us now to one of our most serious problems in this matter of orders. It is important, but we can touch on it only briefly; it is what we spoke of last week as the evolving situation. I am trying to show tonight that the order must be integral to the situation and must be recognized as such. But we saw last week that the situation was always developing. If the situation is never stationary, then the order should never be stationary so to speak; how to prevent it from being so is our problem. The situation is changing while orders are being carried out, because, by and through orders being carried out. How is the order to keep up with the situation? External orders never can, only those drawn fresh from the situation.

Moreover, if taking a responsible attitude toward experience involves recognizing the evolving situation, a conscious attitude toward experience means that we note the change which the developing situation makes in ourselves; the situation does not change without changing us.

To summarize, what have we learned on the subject of the giving of orders? That, integration being the basic law of life, orders should be the composite conclusion of those who give and those who receive them; more than this, that they should be the integration of the people concerned and the situation; more even than this, that they should be the integrations involved in the evolving situation. If you accept my three fundamental statements on this subject: (1) that the order should be the law of the situation; (2) that the situation is always evolving; (3) that orders should involve circular not linear behavior - then we see that our old conception of orders has somewhat changed, and that there should therefore follow definite changes in practice.

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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
GRADUATE SCHOOL  
Elements of Personnel Administration

INTRODUCTORY LECTURE  
by  
Whiting Williams

I presume I ought first to explain why I got into this personnel field. I got interested in the first place in social work, but it happens that I had been pushed out of social work into Cleveland into industry, without having had the type of experience required, in an organization with around 4,000 workers. When I came to exercise my functions and fulfill my responsibilities and discover what was on the mind of the 4,000 workers, I found it was very difficult to get under their skin. When I attempted to talk with them, they would merely shift a chew of tobacco from one cheek to the other and look me over, and it came very shortly to look as though I was going to lose this job. Finally I looked in on the President of the Company and proposed that, in order to fit myself for the job, I should put on overalls and get a job and live on whatever level went with that job, with the hope that I might be able to get forward. My friends thought I would not be able to fool anybody into accepting me as a common laborer, but on the contrary it was the easiest thing in the world.

(At this point Dr. Williams gave a few anecdotes of his personal experiences as a laborer. At one time he was working in a little railroad town. One day when he came home from work, the landlady gave him hope that a soul had seen in him a kindred spirit. She said to him, "You know that girl who was here a little while ago?" He could not have helped noticing her, she had quite a vivid taste in colors. "What about her," he asked. The landlady said, "She told me you looked like somebody she used to go around with."



(He went on to say that he was accepted as one of them in America. "It was the same when I came to make the same kind of study in England and later on in France and in Germany." In Germany on the Ruhr and Sahr he got the closest to the workers in the coal mines. After working in the mines all day, everybody would take a shower bath. Eight or ten would crowd into a compartment made for four or five at the most, and everybody would scrub the back of the ones in front of him in the hope that somebody else would do the same for him.)

I went for a number of years to personnel conferences, where I have been dismayed to find the small amount of interest given to the problem of motivation - what makes people work. On the contrary I found that those conferences gave an entirely undue amount of time to the telling or description of various methods, i.e. "In our factory, we work such a plan and it gives such results," as if one were seeking a sort of formula. Some of the boys would come and say, "What do you do in case of strike", or "Why is it that such and such a scheme does not work at this place, when it does at such a place."

It was all in relation to methods, but nothing about the fundamentals of the problem, and I wonder why it is that we are not willing to take more time to study our fellow human beings. Every one is perfectly willing to admit if you want to study agriculture, you must understand under what conditions land is willing to do its best. If you are going to become an electrician, you are perfectly willing to study those conditions under which electricity is most willing to do its work. But when it comes to working with human beings and helping them to function at their best, we are perfectly sure that every blessed one of us is a natural born expert, that we know all there is to know about others, because we are humans ourselves.

It is like the village fool, Harolip Bill. He had surprised all of the smart alecks of the town by going out and finding the horse of the deacon which had strayed and for the return of which \$10 had been offered, and when he came back leading the horse, they all asked him how he did it. "Well," said Bill. "I said to myself that I will go out and take a look where I would have gone if I had been a horse. And I went and looked and there it was."

It is the same in every line. If I should go out and ask myself where I would go if I were a fish, I would become the world's best fisherman. But with human beings, we all assume that one guess is as good as another.

When I tried to find what makes the wheels go round and makes a man work, I found that the guess which my fellow executives had made was absolutely 100 percent wrong. I had sat in groups and talked with other vice presidents of steel companies, and we had agreed that we could be certain of one thing, that is, that the worker only wants the pay check. The reason he does his job is because he needs the money. Unless you treated this worker as a greedy person who had to have the money and was interested in nothing else, you could never get anywhere with these workers.

But when I became a worker myself, imagine my surprise when I found them explaining the actions of the vice presidents in exactly the same way and giving them the same explanation that my vice president friends had given of them. They said to me, "If only these higher ups, brass hats, big executives, cared no more for money than we do, but you see the brass hats, big executives, etc., want nothing but money, money,



and you can do all sorts of things for them, but unless it means money, they can't see it. If only they had as little regard for money as we."

You have to believe that something is wrong with an explanation of conduct that is accepted by everybody for the other fellow but is refused by everybody for himself. So I tried to work out just what it was, if it wasn't money, that people wanted. I came to the framing of a theory to this effect - that every one of us human beings finds the biggest job, the greatest challenge, the most serious obstacle in our individual lives in exactly the same thing, the same place, whether we are the head of a government, the head of a company, or a ditch-digger. We have a terrible time to believe in ourselves, to consider that we have a right to think seriously of ourselves. So many things challenge our right to believe that we are holding up our end and, under the conditions in which we find ourselves, doing as well as anyone else could do. That is the hardest job in the world for every one.

I think I should say that you over there (pointing) would at this minute give your right arm if you could be as sure of yourself as a person in the society of America as the person who sits next to you seems to be. I have investigated that person, and from the bottom of my heart I tell you that that person isn't nearly as sure or at least any surer than you are, but has simply developed a better technique for making you think so, but it hasn't helped him make him feel surer of himself. He is wondering just exactly whether he is worth while or not in the same way you are. Just as in nature every force can be considered as a flight into vacuum, so in human society the force which motivates us all is the desire to get away from the zero of personal

insignificance, whether we are young or old, sane or insane, waking or sleeping, our whole concern is with staging a successful flight from futility, the possibility that after all I am not worth while. That is the thing that keeps us on the anxious seat. That means also that the rating of the matter of distance away from this zero is so vital a function that not one of us can trust to our own eyes the determining of that distance away from this zero. We have to have our rating of that distance, our success in the staging of the flight confirmed by some group whose judgment we trust.

The moment that you choose your group in whose eyes you are going to rest your case, you have determined the direction in which you are going to make your progress. Therefore, if you are in charge of human beings, you must have in mind that you cannot understand that person's conduct unless you understand the group and the doings that are allowed by that group -- on which desires this person has his eye.

That makes it a difficult problem, because this is a very hard thing to understand as it is not constant. I stepped one time into a saloon in the lowest slums of Liverpool, England. I chose the saloon because there were a lot of baby carriages in front of it. As I had expected, I found inside a large number of the neighborhood housewives with babies on their knees. I went up to a woman whose face looked interesting and asked her how things went. The woman said, "I hardly knows." "What do you mean?" "I just go out of jail, seven days for being drunk and fourteen days for assaulting the officer." Just then a sailor went by, and she cried, "Hello, husband Jack." "Is that



your husband," I asked. "In a manner of speaking. The court makes him pay me a pound a month for my baby." I am learning a good deal about the conditions of her group, what she can do, and so on, but I cannot take a chance, because I find that most of my observations are wrong. I offer her a cigarette and she takes it with alacrity. But I make a mistake. When I offer to light her cigarette, I am reminded of the last picture in the comic strips, when one person says such a startling thing that the other person is seen suddenly disappearing from the scene. I came near falling over when she said, "Oh, no, sir, I would not be for smoking here. All the neighbors would talk."

Where we make our greatest mistake is to leave out the man's group and to misunderstand what are absolutely the requirements in the formation of his conduct, so what I am saying is that this theory takes into account the inner hope of the individual to amount to something, with the direction of its working determined by the standpoint of the man's group. I am saying that keeping up with the Joneses, after you select the persons whom you desire to have for the Joneses, or in other words "face", becomes exceedingly important. The great difficulty is that when you ask, "Why can't this labor leader do so and so?", you must have in mind that there are certain things that he must require, because failure to require these would be absolute proof of his treason, his treachery, to his group, and the loss of his face. The same is equally true with the employer. There may be many things which he personally considers reasonable, but which he cannot possibly consider granting and still save his face with his particular group.

So that this theory has the least usefulness of any of showing, of emphasizing, the importance of a man's relations with his group as touching upon this extremely vital soul's bottom consideration of the necessity of his being able to think fairly well of himself. I have come to believe that every society permits the same description that Goldschmidt gave of the society he found in France. He was impressed because he found there was more social cement in France than there was in England.

He spoke of the French by saying, "Theirs are those hearts that mind to mind endearing, for honor forms the social temper here. From hand to hand it goes around the land; from countries to camps, to cottages it strays till all are taught their avarice of praise."

I was delighted to find that Shakespeare had put the very same words into the mouth of Henry IV. He says to his companions, "I have no interest in gold, and I covet not that sort of thing. My interest does not lie in such outward merits. But if it be a sin to covet honor, then I am the most sinful soul alive."

I think you and I and all of us could say that thing: If it be a sin to covet honor, esteem, standing, recognition, then all of us are in exactly the same way. Honor is sought because it gives a certain distinction in which we have a right to say to that extent, "Thank God, I can feel that I have achieved."

In America, you have wealth sought for because very largely it has been used as a basis of honor. The larger number of people in America are bright enough to say that a man that is worth two million dollars is just twice the man as the man with one million dollars.



But we must have in mind that money is important only when it serves as a symbol of esteem.

I have been in mining towns where you could not get esteem with money; where the day rate was so high that you could not spend it up by buying social position. You could not have a better house than the other workers because all the houses were exactly of the same type. You could not show that you were a car owner, because nobody could have an automobile. You could not show it by buying a better radio or a better victrola, because everybody in the town had absolutely the best radios and victrolas that could be bought for money. How could you show that you were a better man than your neighbor? In one way - you could loaf more than the other fellow. The thing became turned upside down. The people would say, "I don't have to work as hard as these other people." Everyone in the town would wish that he were like one of the men who could walk out three hours before the others dared to quit work. Loafing there was a degree of esteem; money wasn't. You could not buy esteem with money.

I have in mind a town in Ohio where a concern tried to make sure that they would have a certain amount of work out by offering a very high piece rate. They complained, "We cannot get these girls to work in this town more than four days a week. After that they loaf." With the money that you could earn in four days you could reach the highest pinnacle of social esteem in that town. So they imported some people from Chicago that had a higher level of living and got these girls working five days a week, because everybody knows that a girl might as well be dead as to be a gorgette girl in a crepe de chine town.

These are the things in my opinion that satisfy the fundamental desires. I have come therefore from my studies in various parts of the country to feel that the distinctive thing about America is that beyond any other country in the world we have contrived in one way or another to tie up this honor system, this system of esteem, and of standing, and of recognition, this honor system, I say, we have contrived to tie up with the world of work. In America, beyond any other country in the world, when you say, "Who is John Smith?", you mean not, "Who was his father?" not "Who was his family?", but "What is his job?"

And I found also to my surprise that throughout the entire working world every job has its certain place in a very complicated hierarchy of honor and esteem and standing. For instance, after I worked for three weeks in a labor gang, the boss asked me how I would like to belong to the Mill-Wright gang. I didn't know what the Mill-Wright gang was. I asked him, "How much do I get?" He answered, "Two cents an hour more." I supposed that the job was not much better. I got the surprise of my life a little later when I got my new tools. I was strolling along like a laborer until I met my old companions that had left an hour ago. And then every Greek, and every Pole, and every Russian, they all stopped and gave me a wonderful reception, and said "Hey, bootie, where you ketcham job? You Mill-Wright? Oh, My God, you one lucky son-o-gun."

I had been puzzled that when I tried as a common laborer to talk to the first and second helpers they would not talk to me. They looked at me as though to say that I did not realize that they were helpers. But as soon as I got the raise which put me above the level of the labor



gang, they were just as nice as pie. Because I had gotten a two-cent-an-hour increase? Not at all. But because I had begun to move up in the world of greater skill.

I found that everywhere. Over in Wales when I was a miner, when after doing a hard day's work of loading coal, we would walk back a mile and have to line ourselves up, along would come half a dozen fellows and walk right past us and take their places in the hoist. I asked my friend, "Who are they?" He replied, "Those do be the colliers; they always have the first chance." In a mining town, the collier, the expert that works with the coal, is the aristocrat. Above him is the pick coal miner who is more expert than he.

So that the whole situation indicated this: That in the world of workers from top to bottom you have every worker in the world knowing this fact -- that he determines his standing as a man among his fellow men, as a citizen among his fellow citizens, first of all by the demonstration he gives of himself as a worker among his fellow workmen. He determines the standing, the place in the group upon which his wife and children move in the community by the nature of his job, and in that nature of the job there is given consideration to the amount of money, but also to the amount of skill, training, responsibility, chance for promotion, and so on. So that this job that I thought was only two cents an hour better was much better in terms of esteem, standing, recognition, all of the way through.

I feel that the work, the job, plays a part in man's spiritual and social life, because it represents a well-marked, well-defined

ladder of importance, so that if a man gets up to having that kind of job, he can be sure that he is that much better than the man who has the lower job. He finds it is an honor in being able to say, "That is the kind of man I am because that is the kind of job that I can do." In America this hierarchy of work and work improvements and work skills offers a sort of ladder in which the citizen has the chance by means of concentrating on his job, to get the definite assurance of a certain distinction from this vague cipher of insignificance. It offers a ladder; but it also offers a platform for maintaining all his respect. In this mining town I found that the laboring man was the least important man in the town because he was the least important workman in the mine. That is true of every job in the world. There is a sort of social or spiritual fiber that ties into this whole honor system that goes right down to peoples' souls as well as in their pockets.

Job #1 is tied up with Job #2 because it can't be done until Job #1 is done. Through a man's job he is tied into the whole race of man together. I have in mind the locomotive fireman who said to me one night, "You see the engineer across the way? You would think he is running the whole railroad. Mr. Engineer could not get his engine very far down the line unless he got his power from me." One depends upon the other.

In talking to one of the picturesque bums in a saloon, he showed me his fishing vessel. He said, "That is what won the Great War - us fishermen in boats like that, always clearing the sea of torpedoes, gave the Navy a chance to do the work." I have heard



coalminers tell me that the Great War was won by coal and the coalminers. I insulted the last man that you would think you could have insulted, the Secretary of the International Hobos Union, when I mistook him for a tramp. He said, "You don't suppose I would be a tramp, do you? We hobos are migratory workers. We have to get from one part of the country one season of the year to another part of the country the next season. We hobos have to take a train. A tramp is nothing but a bum that walks from job to job. A tramp is miles above a bum. A bum neither rides nor walks nor works.

You cannot possibly talk about the honor system of this deep down wish of man to believe in himself unless you talk about man's work.

Every one of us prays, "Oh, God, Establish Thou the work of our hands. The work of our hands, establish Thou it." Is that because we are concerned, if we make a watch, as to whether it will go forever? We are not troubled with the value of the hands, but with the value of the owner of the hands. I think the proper approach to the problem of personnel is through a realization that the job offers a ladder of esteem and of achievement, sets the group levels in prestige, serves to reassure the individual as to his value in society, and finally the job serves also as the basic platform for the individuals self respect.

If you get these spiritual things which to into it, then you begin to understand the extent to which fear of joblessness constitutes the very beginning of the whole labor problem for the average worker. The fear of joblessness is the fear that the absolute misery

will come upon you when you cannot believe in yourself as a human being, because you go about and say, "Can't you give me a job?", and they all say, "No." The lack of a job when a man wants it, the spiritual conditions of unemployment make joblessness by all means the greatest destructor and demoralizer of human faith in the world. Of course, I also would like to insert the word that, that being so, you are not going to solve the problem of the misery of joblessness by means of unemployment insurance. I am indeed for it, and I agree in working for it, if you will accept it as a pacificer. But that belief that it solves the unemployment problem is wrong. It does not. It does not form a substitute, because there is no substitute for a job except another job. No substitute. There is no imagination that could go beyond and overstate the misery, the complete wish to give up when a man says, "Here I am, I would like to believe in myself and feel that I have helped to make my contribution, but nobody gives me a chance."

The fear of joblessness comes out of this thing, and nobody, you cannot understand why men will go to the length they go to if you think it is only a money proposition. This matter makes many people oppose piece work. If you work hard you put your friends out of a job that much sooner. It helps you understand why men join unions. The other members of the union say, "If any man tries to put you off your job, buddy, remember we are here to help protect you." So the fear that comes from the threat of loss of self-respect, the threat of loss of the chance to show what manner of man you can be on this ladder,



is what constitutes the very backbone of the problem. This matter of the ladder, the definite assurances given by the rungs of the ladder in terms of standings of the various jobs, does also help to make plain how important in this whole matter of work and industrial relations and personnel is the hope of a chance at promotion; the hope that by mastering this job, by learning all about it, understanding it, you can be found worthy to go to that job, this job, and that job. I have heard thousands tell me the story of their lives by saying, "Ten years ago I could only handle that job, but five years ago I went to that job, and here I am now on this job. This is the kind of guy I am." The most definite method of demonstration you could imagine.

So when you merely give people a job and say, "This is yours to have and hold as long as you like, but nothing you can do will ever get you that job," that isn't work. That leaves out a large part of this desire for honor, this wish for worth.

If there were time I should like to have a chance to talk about the various things I think can be done in the way of developing career possibilities so that a person can feel that if he will take the time and gain experience, to make of himself more of a person than he was five years ago, he will be sure to have a chance to demonstrate that by reaching a higher rung on the ladder. That seems to be the thing that could be discussed more in detail. It all means, as I see it, that the quality of work is an arena in which men strive to do their best for the gaining of better recognition and understanding from the people outside, so that, after all, the real payer of the wages you are earning in the Government and everywhere else is not your employer, but the public that

sets certain standards on the value of your services.

I have in mind that in 1872 the nurses of Bellevue Hospital were women picked off the street for soliciting and given a choice between ten days in jail and ten days' work in the Hospital. What has happened since? Why are you willing to have your sisters become nurses? Is it because more money is paid now? I don't believe so. The chief reason is that the grandstand has changed around this arena in which people perform in the doing of their jobs, and we have come better to understand the responsibility, the character, the skill and technique required for the person doing that job properly. If today you and I would make it so that every nurse had to apologize for doing nursing, if she tells you she is a nurse, and you say, "Oh," and look away and change the subject, I say to you, if the next day you could double the money paid to nurses throughout America, we could not day after tomorrow, have a quality of nurses in any way comparable to what we had the day before.

The world of work is the world of honor which makes the world of recognition and standing. I am speaking of that as indicating a certain line of possibilities in the way that there can be a head of a Department who can help to establish a greater regard for the job by offering certain rewards in the terms of recognitions and honors for the doing of the job. But also there is another tool - that is the tool of praise. I must conclude by recalling how there in this Welsh coal town, the under-manager had thought that he had to be pretty strict with his people. He thought they would take advantage of him if he gave them a chance. Then he went over to the war with them. Over there in



the fields of Flanders he came to understand how noble they were. When he got back, he put into operation a different kind of handling of these men; he changed from driving to leadership.

One night the old man Pugh, my old friend, Evan Pugh, said to a group of us, "Yesterday the under-manager do say to me down there in the pit, 'Mr. Pugh, that do be a fine job' and I do say to him, 'Mr. Under-Manager, the forty-three years of working in this pit in forty-three years, that is the first time that any company man do say to me a kind word about my work. And every man do know that for a kind word he would work his hands off.'"

Every man must have a chance here on the job to show himself the man he really is. And I can't wish you here today anything more important, anything that goes more down into the bottom of your souls, then to hope that you will be able to say that you are working today under a man that gives you chances to show what manner of man you are on your job. And if it is the contrary, I can't wish anything more fundamental for the people who work under you then that they, too, can say, "Yes, indeed, I work under a Department head that gives me a chance to show the manner of man I am there on my job, thank God."

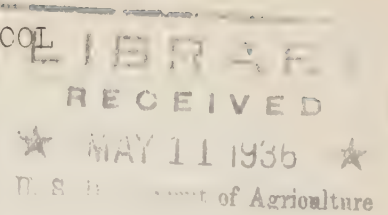
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DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE GRADUATE SCHOOL

Elements of Personnel Administration

Lecture April 17

NON-FINANCIAL INCENTIVES

by Boyd Fisher



Before we walk far into confusion with our somewhat questionable subject, I think it proper that we take our bearings with respect to it.

There can be no doubt of the odium that attaches to the suggestion in the title that we are going to look for ways of getting more work out of people without paying them for it.

So let me say at the beginning that I'll have no part in any such enterprise. Plain old money incentives are bad enough, when employed with calculating forethought to speed up production. "Task and bonus systems" associated in 1911 with the name of Harrington Emerson, and "Differential piece work systems," invented long before that by Frederick W. Taylor, are two of the names of financial stimulants to greater output which fell into disrepute with workers. In the days of the great efficiency movement, so-called,--I can speak informedly of them, for I was manager of the first Efficiency Society in this country--the public was suddenly made familiar with a whole group of mechanisms by means of which labor was made to "shake a leg". The demonstration was first made in what are known as machine shops; that is, in places where metals, including steel, are turned and scraped and planed and ground and smoothed, to prescribed shapes and dimensions with tools driven by power machines. Taylor and White invented a tool steel that could be dug into other metal longer, deeper and faster than ever before without burning up its cutting edge. Carl Barth redesigned the power machines to take advantages of this new tool capacity and made them move into the work much faster than ever hoped for, without undue vibration or variation of speed. Taylor and his associates then invented



a system which became the very keystone of "scientific management" for moving raw material unceasingly up to machines and finished parts as steadily away again; and mechanically the efficiency engineer's work was complete. It now became theoretically possible for machine work to be done at incredibly greater speeds.

At first, however, it was not done faster. The stumbling block was the inertia and moral resistance of the worker. His habits were crystallized around a certain rate of production. His pay was geared to it. His loyalty to his fellow workers was associated with it, and even his theories about there being just so much work to be passed around (so why kill the goose, etc., by getting through too soon?) stood in the way.

The worker, in short, saw nothing in the new mechanical efficiencies of advantage to him, and he refused to change his pace. He did not often openly balk, but he knew many cunning little tricks which enabled him to appear terribly busy, without doing any more work.

So the engineers devised time and motion study, a fiendishly ingenious system for analyzing motions in the performance of a routine task, and recording the time of each fractional move with an athlete's stop watch. The worker could no longer "stall," could no longer conceal the waste motions and other little schemes for slowing up work. Frank Gilbreath even took motion pictures of the job studies, with the stop watch shown as part of the set-up, and developed them on cross hatched film, like plotting paper, and the worker had no alibis left. His sins could be thrown on a screen, run in slow motion, or run backward.

When thus thoroughly exposed and with all his defenses down, the worker was set off in a department by himself, immune to the mass pressure of his fellow workers and told that if he would heave into the work without

stint, his pay would be made proportional. In fact, if he made certain prescribed bogies, his rate of pay would suddenly increase for the whole job, he would get a bonus, or a differential, or some other prize. He tried it, and was astonished to find himself drawing two or three times his former rate of pay. Gradually, his fascinated and envious fellow workers were let in on the graft, until the entire former work force--or at least all of the lesser number that were now needed to do the job--were all on high pay, and turning out the work like very devils. It was the "financial incentive" that had done it.

I was once enthusiastic about the results obtained in this manner. In fact the whole country was. It was a great fad, the first efficiency movement in 1911, ushered in by Louis D. Brandeis--now of the Supreme Court--when he made it front page news in connection with a famous freight rate litigation.

Labor, however, as a movement, didn't like it from the start, because it set workers off in rivalry with each other, weakened their attachment to union organization, union ethics, or union shibboleths. More than that, they early saw what it took us mere observers longer to appreciate, that unscrupulous employers could speed up their isolated workers to unhealthy extremes, and then reduce the piece work rates, so that they got no more pay than formerly but had to work harder to get it.

Convinced of this danger, organized labor decided to fight. As a first engagement it cracked the whip on Congress and compelled it to specify in connection with appropriations for the arsenals that no money could be spent on work done under the spur of differential piece work and bonus systems. From then on "Scientific management," and "incentive systems" became interchangeable terms to Labor, and both were anathema.



So the financial incentive first came into disrepute with the workers affected and then, as abuses were actually demonstrated, even the disinterested public came to see that the use of the pay system itself as a means of compelling labor to accept the employer's point of view as to what constitutes a fair day's output, has the worker at an unfair disadvantage. The whole idea came to seem somewhat disreputable.

What shall we say, then, in favor of a so-called "non-financial incentive"? Is this not, on the fact of it, a crafty substitute, designed to achieve the same dubious results without even the compensation of higher pay?

In some cases, at least, that it unquestionably is, therefore before I ask this audience to follow me far in a discussion of this topic. Before you are asked, therefore, to be either for or against non-financial incentives, you will have to consider upon what side of the fence you are sitting. As students of employment problems you in your imagination picture yourself as future personnel managers charged with the responsibility of prodding lazy people into doing a fair day's work. You may be eager to hear of any clever tricks for accomplishing such results without asking your employer to put up any hard cash for them.

On the other hand, you may be realistically aware of the fact that you are at present Government employees and more likely to be the guinea pigs on which such an incentive is tried. In fact, it is a practical certainty that, since there is no possibility in a Government bureau of your work's being exactly measured, or paid for in proportion to the amount done, there is no room here for financial incentives. Your superiors have no available cash to bribe you into speeding up your rate of output. If they are interested at all in trying to make you produce more and better results, they have to adopt subtle means--and in all probability, you are already

subjected to various kinds of non-financial inducements, hopefully regarded as incentives.

At this point, we are ready to indicate a little more clearly what we mean by non-financial incentive. I think we may take it to be propaganda, reduced to the narrow scale of industry or other employment. It has its resemblance to propaganda for making people declare war, or enlist in it, or put up money for it, or pursue it with more reckless fury. It has its resemblance to political propaganda, which plays upon ingrained prejudices and hatreds, and makes people forsake quests for economic improvement to join a parade going nowhere. It has its resemblance to advertising propaganda, which uses sex appeal in pictures, resorts to fear, shame and cupidity motives in textual appears, and links commercialism with sweet music on the radio.

In short, non-financial incentives in industry in many cases are the devices invented by those who knowingly employ psychology to play upon the motivations of unsuspecting workers, to get more out of them.

This gives us a clue to what our attitude ought to be, and we see that there is nothing intrinsically good or bad about these non-financial incentives, any more than there is about war, political or advertising propaganda. There is never anything inherently wrong in one person's making adroit use of psychology to persuade another to a course of action. The aim may be base and selfish or it may be altruistic and the result good for the subject.

The fact has to be recognized, however, that the inducement to persuade is usually something to the advantage of the person who employs the psychology and to the relative disadvantage of the person persuaded.



Our initial attitude toward our topic, therefore, has to be one of skepticism; our follow through must be an attitude of caution, and our whole approach must be governed by honest doubt.

There need be no hesitation in our admiration for the artistic skill with which man's rulers have built up their domination of the common herd. There is, indeed, a common plan or pattern for propaganda to be observed in war, in religion, in politics; and business, of course, has used not only the common pattern but all the special devices of war, religion and politics.

The detonating force of all propaganda is what is known in psychology as the "escape mechanism". This is a device for setting pleasure off against pain. It consists in threatening the victim with dire consequences on the one hand, and, on the other, of offering him an escape or emotional outlet down a channel which leads straight to the result desired by the propagandist. It is a fact which is often overlooked with regard to propaganda, that it is not effective unless it offers an alternative to some threat.

In war, for instance, propaganda, as it affects the soldier, is a very patent piece of business. Regarded with clear vision, the lot of the soldier is a desperate one. He has no ease or comfort; he receives very small pay; he is fed on simple and often distasteful food; he is frankly told that he is going to be sent into a conflict more terrifying than that between gladiators in the Roman arena; but warned by his officers that if he tries to escape or openly rebels he may be shot as a traitor. The only mitigation to the unhappy side of his career is the plain evidence that hundreds of his fellows are not only in the same situation, but that some of them may serve as buffers to receive the blows intended for him. Considering the low mental and spiritual level of the average conscript soldier, as measured by Dr. Goddard in the late war, it is astonishing

to see how simple fellows, who might be thought incapable of sacrifice or dying for others, were fired with zeal to march into battle with as little hesitation as cattle going into the abattoir.

What is the secret of this great persuasion? It is a process which military men know by the name of indoctrination. It consists of a whole nexus of devices for diverting the soldier's mind from fear and foreboding and offering it an escape into stimulating and pleasurable emotions. There are uniforms, which catch the feminine eye, bands which play marches to ancestral rhythms, flags which not only delight with their own beauty but which come to have almost religious significance as symbols.

There are gradations in rank and promotions for military efficiency; there are various competitions in rifle practice, drill, camp orderliness; there is the "buddy" motivation which plays up sentimentally the comradely equalities and fellow feeling of common danger.

There is, also, the straight mesmerism of the drill, the salute, the command and the address before battle. There is the hypnotic influence of braver men. There is the very definite preachment about the holy aims of war, which is always waged on both sides of the battle on behalf of God and country and freedom and honor.

And, at the end, a cross is hung--either the Croix de Guerre for the hero who survives, or the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, with the wreath of tribute laid by visiting dignitaries and the pillar of undying light.

It might almost seem that war had discovered all the tricks for making people do things for their own disadvantage, but I think sometimes, that religion has not only borrowed the war technique but developed some improvements in it. Here, of course, there is the same old fear and pain, death and the mystery of the Beyond, injustice and pain and sorrow on earth,-- the strange enigma of man's destiny of suffering. The effective device of



religion, particularly in the past, has been to accentuate the fear and repugnance of this fate by preaching hell-fire, by reminding man of his dangers, and making him think of himself as "a poor worm." It then offered the alternative--the escape mechanism,--the channel to happiness and glory which led him through the discipline of the church, holding the hand of the Shepherd of the Flock, and dropping a coin into the plate by the way. Many of the "non-financial incentives" of war are still resorted to by religion, with polite modifications--hymns and choral singing instead of the war bands; ritual instead of drill; icons, fetishes and images in place of flags, but indoctrination from very childhood. Religion has not seen fit as much as war to employ rank as an incentive, despite its paraphernalia of elders, deacons, vestrymen, etc. It has not employed decorations and honors for satisfactory service in any wide degree, but it has far outplayed war in promoting the communicable joy of congregational emotions and in appealing to the motivations of self-sacrifice and public honor. Religion has identified itself with every emotion of the human heart, as with christenings and marriages, and has contrived to make even the bitter ones yield something of solemn satisfaction, as in the ritual of the funeral service. It has achieved the great success of persuading mankind to look for its greatest reward after death.

In the face of these two propagandist agencies it would be trivial, almost, to speak of the use of similar devices in politics and in business. Politics looks to the methods of war with the campaign, the torch-light parades, the slogans, the banners, etc.,--it does not even fail to oppose pleasure to pain, the alternatives being "support the Party, or lose your job!" Business, on the other hand, has taken its tone more from religion--by deft analogies too familiar to be dealt with here.

Certainly the climax of all propaganda is to be found in the practices of certain European countries today in dealing with their citizens. Mussolini, Hitler and Stalin employ all the mechanisms we have cited. By making war, religion, politics and business all interchangeable aspects of the citizenship the results are stupendous. In Italy even children of three are enrolled as soldiers, trained as soldiers and think as soldiers. In Germany, Hitler calls an election and receives more than 99% of the votes. In Russia the results are no less complete.

In fact, it seems to me that Russia has taught the world the meaning of propaganda, because it appears to have penetrated deeper into economic and social motivations of its people than either Italy or Germany has gone. It has given the workers a goal, which even the simplest appreciate, in its five, and in its ten-year plans. It has led the people to greater efforts, not alone by direct preachment but also by creating honor for "Heroes of Labor," enrolling people under the "Red Banner of Toil" and making them vie for the "Order of Lenin". Recently, it has launched a new motivation, a mixture, a new ideal, partly by the use also of both financial and non-financial incentives, known as Stakhanovism.

Perhaps you will allow me to quote from Maurice Hindus' book "Humanity Uprooted", to show how the non-financial incentives have been applied in Russia, and with what results.

"The psychic incentives the Russians have brought into play", he says, "are in some instances a new departure in modern life. There is, of course, promotion with all its accompanying gratifications--prestige, responsibility, power. There is competition with one enterprise pitted against another and there is the excitement that follows in the wake of strife for special distinction or recognition. There is the plan of achievement mapped out for the year by the State Planning Commission, and constantly



held up as the goal to be reached and, if possible, to be surpassed. There are the celebrations of outstanding attainments--parades with banners, songs, mass-meetings at the opening of a new factory, a new bridge, a new artesian well. There is the appreciation of merit through bestowal of the title of 'hero of labour' and the banner of the 'red labour flag,' both, and especially the latter, conferring on the recipient honour, glory and a host of special privileges. His name is mentioned in the press and in official publications. He is always pointed out to visitors. I have never been in a Russian factory but the 'heroes of labour' were introduced to me and spoken of with special pride, almost with reverence. They are the elite in the land. They get the best in living quarters, education of children, vacations--anything and everything. In an egoistic sense these titles are the highest rewards possible in Russia.

"And how strenuously the Russians are striving to inculcate in the individual and especially in the worker the sense of proprietorship! 'What stimulates me most,' once remarked a youthful manager of a packing house, 'is the advance we are making. Every time we start a new engine, not only here in this plant but anywhere in the union, or we lay a foundation of a new factory, or dig a new canal, I feel thrilled, because I know it is done not for any one individual or group of individuals, but for the mass and for me as much as for anybody.' This is precisely how the revolutionaries want every worker and official in industry to feel. They are to speak in terms of proprietorship, such as, 'our factory,' 'our shop,' 'our cooperative,' 'our club,' -- our everything. They are ever to remember that the more successful the enterprise the more lavish will be the rewards, material and others, which it will make possible for them."

I think no one will have done me the honor of following me thus far without realizing that non-financial incentives are not alone potent, in many fields, but also generally of more value to those who employ them than to those who are affected by them. It is pertinent to ask, however, whether these motivations can ever be employed for the benefit chiefly of the people affected. I think they can be, and the beginning of any effort to secure this result is an analysis of what goals are to be achieved, and by what devices. This analysis must be made frankly with, and by the persons to be affected by such devices.

I therefore invite Government workers to ask themselves what legitimate motivations other than a desire for immediate profit affect them, and how far for their own good. We can approach this best by analyzing again the financial incentives. They almost always consist of immediate pay for an immediate result, without regard to long-time interests. Quite frequently they involve payment only in the event of achieving a definite result, without regard to the labor expended or lost. Thus business men for their efforts run the risk of losing money as well as entertain the hope of gaining. Financial incentives, in short, are geared always to results and seldom to effort, and usually involve a risk of not getting paid at all. It is often asserted that we in America are controlled by the profit motive,-- that our civilization would fall apart without it. This statement will not stand up under analysis, when we observe that actually the majority of our people prefer to accept certainty and security in place of the higher rewards usually associated with the risk of the profit system. Millions of people serve as teachers, letter-carriers, policemen, firemen, clerks and simple day laborers,--satisfied with regular pay, if only it be regular. Eight million white and black persons in the south live as share croppers, with scarcely any pay at all, for the simple guarantees of rude shelters, tattered



clothing and a diet consisting of the three m's--meal, meat and molasses. The majority of people, in fact, are more persuaded by the guarantees of security and comfort than by any extra financial rewards which can be achieved only at the expense of risk and uncertainty. There is no stigma of propaganda about any appeal to the motivation of security and, of course, the Government service, particularly the Civil Service, achieves a greater measure of security than any other employment in this country.

There is no fake, either in the appeal of pleasant working conditions, which involve long vacations, sick leave, social equality with one's bosses, and agreeable and friendly superiors, not concerned too narrowly with their own profit. People seek these things in Government service, because they know they yield satisfactions not to be measured in money. It would be no demerit of private employers, if they offered more of these rewards even in lieu of higher pay.

Government service is not wholly lacking in the appeal of "the Cause" which attaches to war and religion; and it has, furthermore; the great merit that services given in peace to one's Government are cumulative and substantial without involving death or even injury as in war; and that the glory sought in such service is not postponed so long as it is in religion. Any appeal which people choose to make to the motivations of public service seem to me to be legitimate and quite as much for the benefit of the persons appealed to as to any one else. I am forced to admit that the Government can legitimately offer further non-financial incentives which are often lacking in public service. Too frequently the joy of such service is dulled by the lack of adequate standards of accomplishment. We might very well have a five year or a ten year plan for our own country adapted to our own form of government. We might appreciate more definite measures of accomplishment. We might take a share mutually in educating each other as to the goals

and the moral satisfactions of our job. We might, more frequently, have inspired unselfish, non-partisan bosses. We could helpfully progress in the delivery of setting up honors and modes of permanent recognition for notable peace-time services. We might very profitably have our "Heroes of Labor" and our Red, White and Blue Banner of Toil.

The point to be understood, it seems to me, is that non-financial incentives become legitimate only when they are clear-sightedly examined, understood by the persons affected by them, and democratically applied.



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THE TECHNIQUES OF SUPERVISION

By  
H. H. Farquhar



There seems to be a prevalent belief that Governmental work is something quite different from the work of private business. What is good practice in business, it is felt, is not necessarily good practice in the Government work-shop; the principles and the tools of management and of supervision evolved in the business world, tested over long periods of years, have little to offer federal civil service work; the organization of profit-making enterprises could scarcely be adapted to the public service,- so the argument runs.

I am not at all sure that this is the case - in fact I am quite sure that it is not the case. Governmental objectives and activities are of course in many respects quite different from those of private work, and there is naturally a limit to the interchangeability of policy and method between the two.

The individuals, however, are human individuals in both cases, which is the same as saying that innately they are the same in both cases, that their methods and habits of work are much the same, that they have the same desires, abilities, aspirations, inhibitions and shortcomings, and that they respond to leadership or lack of it in the same way.

Having recently returned to Government service after many years in private industry, I hope to be able to point out to you some very fundamental aspects of supervision which are as applicable to the one as to the other.

### The History of Two Companies

In thinking how best to start a discussion of the techniques of supervision with you, a case came to mind which illustrates many of the points I wish to make.

I want, therefore, to contrast the supervision of two companies -- one a comparatively small one making leather products, the other quite a large one making paper products. Both were owned by unusually capable all-round business men who had all operations at their finger tips, both were making money and both had a stable, reasonably contented working force.

Then the owner of the leather factory suddenly died, and shortly afterwards his principal assistant came down with a protracted illness.

As it happened, at practically the same time, the owner of the paper factory left for a continuous eight-month stay in Washington, and his principal assistant simultaneously contracted a disease from which he shortly died.

There resulted an unusual opportunity to observe what happened in each case, and to compare the adequacy of supervision, and of the management of each plant in general.

What happened was this: Within a month the leather factory was completely disorganized and demoralized -- orders had fallen off, men had been discharged, internal friction as to whom the "mantle" should fall on had developed, and a hurry call was sent out for help.

The other factory ran along as smoothly and as busily as ever, without a ripple having been caused by the absence of the two principal men.



Why?

The answer to this question lies at the very base of effective supervision and adequate management - and it is impossible to draw a sharp line between the two.

What is Supervision?

What is "supervision"? What constitutes good supervision? What did the paper factory have which the leather factory lacked? If you will pardon a definition in reverse English, as it were, supervision is the science and the art of so arranging matters of work and responsibilities as to make a minimum of supervision necessary! Obviously, the owner of the paper factory was a good organizer and a good supervisor, else he and his second-in-command could not both have been away from the business for months at a time. I sometimes think that this is the test of a good "boss" - whether he can fade out of the picture for a month or so and still have his department run along effectively.

Some of the principal techniques by which this kind of supervision may be brought to pass - by which it was brought about in the instance of the paper factory - will be described, with particular reference to those techniques which I believe are as applicable to Government as to private work, and as available to each.

Similarities and Dissimilarities in Government and in Private Work

After all, there are many similarities between Government and private work - particularly that part of Government work which most intimately affects you and me and 99 percent of the rest of Government

It might be well to analyze just a bit some of the principal similarities and differences in Government (Civil Service is implied throughout this discussion) and private work, particularly those features where it seems to me, from my own observations and from inquiries among other fellow-workers, the Government might perhaps take a leaf from the practice of well-managed private concerns. The points which I shall touch upon are all related to and play their part in the technique of supervision - the extent to which they are brought into play determines the extent to which really adequate "supervision" is made possible.

In Government service, I believe that the following features are more firmly ingrained and more fully developed than in most private businesses:

1. Job specifications - set up over years of experience by the Civil Service Commission.
2. Careful selection of personnel - through impartial Civil Service examinations. In general a high type of personnel.
3. Standard rates of pay for similar positions, on the whole, I believe, fairer and more adequate than in private business.
4. Good working conditions - certainly far above those generally found in industry.
5. Standardized methods of discharge.
6. A measure of security far in excess of anything that private business has offered. The place which security plays in all of our lives was dramatically brought out by Whiting Williams.

7. Status - (also forcibly emphasized by Whiting Williams) -  
a position in the various planes of society which, whether  
or not we may feel that it is all that it should be, is  
nevertheless quite definite and within our power to raise.

I beg of you, look back over this list of features of employment quite distinctively Governmental - definite classes of work, known to everyone through Civil Service classifications; high grade associates through careful selection; fair and impartial rates of pay; excellent working conditions; known and standardized methods of discharge; security far above anything else to be found in this business of making a living; status; a stable niche in the work-a-day world. I sometimes wonder whether we always realize just what these features mean, or should mean, and whether we always keep in mind the full measure of service which, in all fairness, we should render the Government in return as long as we are content to remain on its payroll. As one fellow employee has put it: "We owe the job a whole lot more than the job owes us." Our recognition and observance of what we owe the job is one of the prerequisites to good supervision.

A frank recognition of our strategic points, our advantages, and our obligations, however, need not make us complacent; as frank a recognition is necessary of those features which may be strengthened, resulting in good supervision being made better. As it seems to me and to some others with whom I have checked, there are several features which may well receive more attention in Government work generally, with the aim of furthering a really outstanding technique of supervision. They are put before you for criticism, discussion, and such action as you feel should be taken and are able to assist in:



### The Two Parts of Supervision

Before going on with these features, however, I should like to digress a moment and refer back to just what is implied in the word "supervision". The subject of this discussion is the "techniques of supervision." That word "techniques" perhaps has a rather mysterious sound - perhaps a connotation that there is an occult aspect to supervision - a formula evolved in the sanctum of the "boss" (who must always be a "born manager", else the case is hopeless), and who trots it out on occasion for the suppression of incipient riot among his subordinates, for the edification of visitors, or for occasions such as this!

Supervision is no such thing, however. In its last analysis the technique of supervision consists of:

- First: A set of conditions, features, aids, mechanisms, facilities - whatever you choose to call them - which must be incorporated in and surround the daily activities of any group of workers before the highest grade supervision becomes attainable;
- Second: A common sense, considered, and considerate day-to-day dealing between superior and subordinate - a recognition that while human nature in the large is pretty much alike the country over, human individuals vary tremendously; and that supervision is no removed distant affair but must for the most part deal individually with the individual as an individual, based on the psychology of human nature.

Supervision, unlike Gaul, therefore, is divided into only two parts - the tangible aids or tools of supervision; and the intangible, psychological or human aspects constituting the finesse or art of supervision.

If you are a "born manager" you are the great exception; and good supervision flows easily from you. Perhaps there are some "born managers"; perhaps some god-like individuals, with innate qualities of supreme leadership

"Whose golden touch' could soften stones and steel,

Make tigers tame, and huge Leviathans

Forsake unsounded deeps to dance on sands."

Perhaps we could point to a few - a very few. If you are not one of them, however, that does not at all mean that you cannot become a good supervisor by utilizing some of the aids, freely available to you, and by consciously observing the rules of the game.

As between the aids or tangible facilities to be utilized, and the intangible attitudes and considerations to be kept in mind, I make no distinction as to relative importance; I am considering them here as the two poles of a battery, both necessary if we are to get effective action.

#### Some Tangible Aids to Good Supervisory Technique

Some of the more important measures in addition to those mentioned in connection with good work which smooth the road to good supervisory technique, then, are these:

a. First of all comes a proper introduction to the job.

I know of a case - more than one, I regret to say - where a fairly highly paid man was brought into a Government department from the outside. Upon his arrival, he was taken to his own immediate superior and left with a formal introduction. The superior of course explained his future duties to him so far as the work itself was concerned, and then he was given a desk and told to go ahead.

Perhaps this work of his was fascinating in itself - I hope so. Many private companies, and I believe some Government bureaus, go to much further lengths, however, in inducting a new employee. One of the indictments against big business and big Government offices, is that an employee becomes a cog in a machine, plays his part simply as a cog, and plods on his monotonous way to the end of his days. Many private companies devote hours, days and even weeks to having the new employee meet various department heads and fellow employees, go through the whole plant seeing the processes from start to finish and learning just where he is to fit into the whole scheme of things, - giving him a background and a perspective, in other words, which they feel makes him a better employee for them, adds interest to his work, and makes of him a little bigger man.

Who can doubt that the necessity of supervision is lessened where this is done?

b. Next comes fitting the employee to the job and training him while he is on it. Why is one person unhappy on the job, while his neighbor, doing the same identical work, is contented? The answer may lie in one or more of three reasons:



First: Because the unhappy individual would be unhappy no matter what he did, simply because of some mental or physical quirk in his make-up or because of domestic or other personal trouble entirely disconnected with his work.

These, however, are not common reasons why he is unhappy in his work.

Second: The individual's personality may necessarily clash with that of his superior - and this through no fault of either. The thing to do here is frankly to recognize that this will sometimes happen, and if possible separate them.

Third: The individual is not fitted for the work he is doing. I believe this is by far the greatest cause of unhappiness on the job.

A striking case comes to mind. When a new supervisor took charge of an office, he found that Miss Kane was helping with work which required the utmost in activity, mental alertness, meeting emergencies and leading a general "catch as catch can" life. Now it happened that she had been endowed by her Creator with composure of spirit and muscle, that she abhorred confusion, that she felt that if things could not be done methodically they had better be left undone - a truly valuable make-up for any office. But on the job to which she had been assigned - impossible! And she was very unhappy about it. The answer was of course perfectly obvious to anyone who really observed and understood - she was given standardized work to do, and soon had to be driven out of the office long after quitting time.

Curiously enough, in the same office, an exactly opposite situation was found - a man doing routine work which was nearly killing him, until he was switched to a more hurly-burly existence in which he reveled.

I could give you dozens of such instances. There is in Washington today a girl who is quite bewildered and ineffective because she has been taken from stenographic work ( which she knows and likes) and put on statistical work ( which she doesn't know and sbhors!)

This matter of fitting and training is of the utmost importance; I venture to say that if tomorrow every last one of us could start on the sort of work that we really love, 90 percent of the supervision now believed necessary would no longer be needed.

In this connection, the selection, fitting, and training of the supervisor is even more important than that of the employee. A technical man does not necessarily make a good boss; supervision in itself is quite an art, and many a good technical man has been ruined to make a poor supervisor.

The qualifications necessary in a man who is to have charge of the work of others are no less definite than the qualifications for many other positions, and the beginnings of good supervision rest in the selection of men and women possessing the basic qualifications necessary. What some of these major qualifications should be, I trust will be clear from the various considerations raised in this discussion.

c. Have you ever heard the expression "He doesn't know what it is all about"? The frequency with which you hear it would be funny if it weren't so tragic - and so true. Why doesn't "he" know all about "it"?

Well, perhaps in many cases the speaker means that "he" hasn't the mentality to understand "its" foundations and its intricacies. In many, many cases, however, it is simply because he hasn't been told - because of lack of proper instructions. I recall a case that happened not very long ago. A division head asked the statistical department to prepare a tabulation of the prices obtained for a certain commodity in each State, "with enough copies for our usual distribution". Now "our usual distribution" mean't two entirely different things to the two men; the statistical man being somewhat in doubt, but a little hesitant to ask questions of a crusty superior officer (a common but perhaps understandable human weakness) went ahead with what he thought was wanted, only later to be brought up sharp for wasting time and stationery for useless copies.

Now, it is true that a really capable employee should have to ask few questions when given instructions. I say "should" have to ask few questions; but this "should" throws the burden on both the employee and the supervisor, and a supervisor who is worth his salt as a supervisor would very much rather have any really necessary questions asked in the beginning, than to get back the wrong thing in the end.

The matter of clear-cut instructions touches our work at every point. In the field of organization, we cannot adequately discharge our obligations unless we are told specifically just what our function covers, and its relation to the functions assigned others. Supervision becomes nebulous when lines of authority and responsibility are nebulous; a cardinal principle of organization is the exact definition of the part each supervisor is to play.



In connection with definite instructions, some offices go much further than others in carefully working out and setting up standard procedures for all features of the work which lend themselves to uniformity. We have many complaints of "Government red tape". Such criticism is entirely justified where action is slowed up, because over a period of years stagnating and unnecessary procedures have gradually attached themselves like lichens to the vital flow of work. Many private concerns have spent long periods of studying the really essential steps in their procedure, in weeding out the unnecessary or "red tape" features, and in writing up standard practice to be followed strictly until some portion of it may be revised.

d. It logically follows that standards must be followed up with adequate methods of measurement of performance. Contrary to the belief of some, I am inclined to feel that most of us want to be measured - objectively and impartially. We like to see, and we like others to see, the progress we are making in our standard of living, in our proficiency on the job, in our own accomplishment relative to our own instincts of workmanship.

The fundamental importance of such measurements will be quite evident in the discussion of the next topic.

e. The final aid to good supervision which I shall mention by way of illustration - for the list is not nearly exhausted - is the matter of incentives, Boyd Fisher last week gave you an illuminating talk on the pros and cons of financial and non-financial incentives. I cannot quite agree with him that "non-financial incentives are .....

generally of more value to those who employ them than to those who are affected by them", although I heartily agree that either financial or non-financial incentives may be unjustly used - in common with many other good things! And either may do more harm than good if they are not based on proper preparatory work and standards.

Non-financial incentives may even be used most effectively and entirely properly where financial incentives are already reasonable and in status quo, so to speak, as in the Government, or where further increases in pay are not economically possible at the time. A case which arose in business a few years ago will illustrate the latter point. It will, I hope, serve also to illustrate the general point which time is not available to discuss; the part which non-financial incentives of various kinds, properly handled, may play in the technique of supervision.

It was necessary in the case mentioned, to reduce overhead expenses drastically if the company was not to go under and turn its workers loose on the street. The company was then paying the going rates of its competitors, and although its officials wished to pay still more, an increase at this time was out of the question. They did not believe, furthermore, in wage reductions for saving money, feeling rather that high wages and low costs (direct labor costs) were perfectly compatible. Material costs were constant and outside our control; economies therefore had to come through many little savings in numberless overhead expense items.

The steps taken in this case illustrate further some of the intangibles which constitute perhaps the "art" of supervision and which lessened the amount of supervision subsequently necessary.

First of all, each department head was brought in, given the whole financial picture, and made to feel that the company's problem was his problem.

He was shown a tabulation, in detail, of his past expenses. Before that time he did not know, or care, what they had been.

Each man pointed out various items of expense which had been charged against his work, but which he said he had no control of. Such items were immediately struck off his future list, so that there remained only those classes of expense for which he agreed to be personally responsible.

Each was then asked to look over the remaining list carefully, to see what might be reduced, and finally to indicate what he himself thought his expense should be - in other words, he was asked to set his own standard. Curiously enough, some of them set themselves entirely too hard a "task".

After making the rounds, the resulting saving (prospective) was considerable, and there the matter was left for the time being.

At the end of the month, without saying a word further, each department head was handed a tabulation of his actual expense, item by item, and alongside this was typed his own estimated expense, with totals for both. In addition, a chart showing the performance of each department separately, and of all departments combined for the company as a whole, was conspicuously posted where everyone could see it.

The effect was astonishing. From that first month expense in every department began to go down and kept going down for months thereafter until it finally found a level. It thereafter became a standard



for an administrative budget, which I wish I had time to describe to you as another most important "tool" of supervision.

The incidental benefits of this expense control "game" - for it was nothing less - showed themselves in many ways: All employees showed a more proprietary interest in the business, a greater urge to be businesslike in all their work, a more sympathetic understanding all the way down and up the line. It was later possible to increase the "financial incentives" of both bosses and workers, due directly I believe to stimulating their interest in and knowledge of the work and their pride in high class standard performance.

#### The Employee's Part in Enabling Good Supervision

In summary, you can do these very specific things toward bringing about a better supervisory technique:

You, as employees, can:

1. Determine that so long as you remain on it, you owe the job the very best you have and will give it nothing less.
2. Make sure that you understand exactly what is wanted, or if not do not hesitate to ask for further instructions.
3. Frankly recognize your personal limitations, your likes and dislikes, and your special aptitudes. If your work is not such that you can drive ahead with it on your own steam, talk the matter over with your supervisor - he is as anxious as you that you do the work for which you are really best equipped.

4. Study your supervisor as he studies you - try to find out and supplement his weak points so that together you can secure maximum team-work.
5. Plan your work and perform it as systematically as you expect your boss to do.
6. Welcome every opportunity to broaden your experience and knowledge of different kinds of work; an ability to "pinch hit" is always appreciated and often leads to advancement.

So much for a few of the very definite things which you, as employees, can do to improve the technique of supervision.

#### The Supervisor's Part in Securing Good Supervision

You, as supervisors, can institute the well-known facilities of supervision utilized today in up-to-date offices:

1. Analyze the operations of your division with a view to determining different classes of work which require different classes of ability or aptitude in their performance.
2. Rearrange operations where necessary, and then work out and record best and easiest methods of work. Where such instructions cannot well be written up, make sure that oral instructions are perfectly clear and definite.
3. Just so far as possible fit each person into the work for which his natural aptitudes best equip him. Follow this up by a continuous course of instructions and training on the job.

4. Balance the available personnel against the amount of necessary work, so that for every employee as even a load as possible will be assigned and maintained.
5. Utilize every reasonable means of stimulating interest in the work and thereby make of it more of a game and less of a task to be got through with.
6. Set up in every possible case definite methods of measuring individual and group performance, and utilize such objectives performance records as one of the prime bases for promotion.

These very tangible aids to supervision, then, are among those freely available to every supervisor, no matter how small or how large his group of employees.

I cannot emphasize too strongly, however, that these or any other such tools or mechanisms of supervision and of management, will never bring satisfying results unless they are animated by the right spirit and continuously accompanied by those other less tangible "amenities" of supervision which it is the obligation of every supervisor to possess and observe. Such "machinery" is a necessary part of the technique of supervision; it is these other "little" unremembered acts of kindness and of love", however, which keep that machinery oiled, and make the difference between the employee becoming a cog in a machine instead of a self-respecting and proficient member of the working community.



A Prayer to "The Boss"

There are, then, various quite specific, tangible aids to good supervision which it is the duty of every supervisor to know and to utilize. As regards the other more intangible but extremely important obligations inherent in the job of supervision, were I to offer a prayer to "the boss", it would run something like this:

Believe that we as individuals want to do our best, that we are eager to do a higher grade of work than we are now doing, and that we welcome further training to fit us for more responsible duties. Particularly do we ask that you make a continuous effort to assign each of us to the kind of work for which we are really best fitted.

Be convinced that we have quite as much a feeling of pride in personal and in group accomplishment as we have of thankfulness for the pay check we receive.

Trust us to approach new and difficult assignments with an open mind provided we are taken into your confidence and given the total picture which we need in order fully to understand, to be enthusiastic about, and to be able to help most intelligently with what is asked of us.

Realize, kind Sir, that courtesy and tact, a little judicious praise now and then, and a bit of human companionship will bring you infinitely better service from us than will irritable words or thoughtless neglect. Pray that it never be said of you as was said of Macbeth:

"Those he commands move only in command,

Nothing in love."

Believe us, that when we make mistakes we want you to show us how to avoid them in the future. We recognize that reproof and even stronger measures are necessary for us at times; when they do become necessary however we should wish that they be educational and not merely fault-finding in nature, confined if possible to the privacy of your own office. Remember that we ourselves are sometimes handicapped because you do not find or make opportunities to exercise the highest leadership; we ask that you put yourself in our places to be sure you are on absolutely sure ground and in possession of all the facts before criticizing us too severely for what perhaps may after all be your own fault -- we can wholly respect you as a boss, dear sir, only when you show that you are not simply a boss, but primarily a good manager.

As you, our supervisor, expect in us loyalty, earnestness on the job and an equipment of technical proficiency, appreciate that we, your employees, know that your own position as a supervisor also requires as high a degree of equipment in knowledge of what constitutes good management and of how to use it.

Realize, we pray, that we like to have a job -- something we can feel is "my job" -- put up to us and left up to us so long as we can master it; that we expect necessary inspection and appraisal of our results, but that we lose heart quickly because of needless interference or haphazard shifts

in assignment of work, perhaps without even telling us that another has been given a part of the work we formerly did, or informing us of your own action which affects the work we are supposed to be handling.

Remember that there is nothing which so destroys our morale as arbitrary or unreasonable action or orders, or orders given as from master to servant rather than as instructions from fellow-worker to fellow-worker.

Realize that we are close to the details of work, and that if properly encouraged we are eager to and can usually make suggestions of real value. If you can freely give us credit for good suggestions, you will stimulate us to better work, thus reflecting credit on yourself.

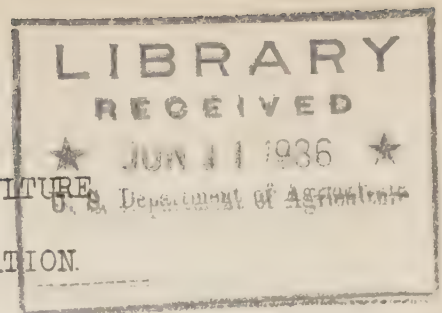
Take our word for it, dear Sir, we honor you as our leader to the degree in which you can bring about real team work; that your success is inseparable from ours and that what forwards our promotes yours. Do not, therefore, we beg, be fearful of our advancement as individuals even to the point of being able to accupy your own job - you will not likely be promoted yourself until you have someone trained to step into your place; the more of us, your pupils, you can help to higher work, the more likely are you to be asked to extend your leadership to larger groups.

Above all, revered sir, pray realize and constantly keep in mind the fact that through a utilization of well-known facilities of work you can materially add



to the ease and quality of our accomplishment; that through a conscious exercise of some of the amenities devolving upon you by virtue of your position you can so lead us and so add to our joy of living and of working that your own job of supervision will made immeasurably less difficult, more effective, and more satisfying to yourself, to us, and to your own superiors.





UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
GRADUATE SCHOOL  
ELEMENTS OF PERSONNEL ADMINISTRATION.

Lecture by Charles S. Slocombe,  
Acting Director, Personnel Research Federation.

Ladies and Gentlemen:

In discussing the subject of employee representation, I should like to consider it from a broad point of view and regard it as any means by which employees' views are brought to the attention of management or of higher supervisory officials.

Employee representation has come to refer only to so-called company unions, or organizations of employees within particular companies and not affiliated with the American Federation of Labor or other trade unions. But employee representation is really something broader than that. There are many different ways in which employees may bring their views to the attention of management. The basis may be organized or unorganized.,

The following three ways may be distinguished:

- (1) Through a recognized trade union
- (2) Through an employee representation plan
- (3) By means of organized conferences.

ASPECTS OF REPRESENTATION IN INDUSTRY

I propose to incidentally discuss some of these methods but shall not do so directly as affecting industry. You are perhaps more interested in the part which the personnel manager should take in employee representation. When we come to discuss the government service we may consider more directly forms of representation.



The case of a company which became involved in two strikes well illustrates different features of employee representation which might be developed, and the relation of the personnel department to them.

This company has approximately eight hundred employees. It had two factories in a town in one state and a branch factory in another state. In 1933 it was decided to concentrate its factories under one roof in the city where most of its work was.

During the course of changing over so that all the operations were done in the same factory, normal production was very low. There were only four hundred employees engaged and even those four hundred employees had a very small amount of work each. Work was done on piece rates, and the company tried to divide the work as much as possible.

Due to the spreading of work the average wage for the plant dropped to less than \$7 a week even though wages were at the rate of 75 or 80 cents an hour. Some employees, because the work was not evenly split, were receiving only 65 cents as a result of their week's work. They came to the factory every day hoping that they would get work.

If this matter had been put to the employees would they have preferred this thin spreading of work and wages or would they have decided that a proportion of employees should be temporarily laid off, so that those remaining could earn a living wage? This question was of comparative indifference to the Company, but of high importance to employees. Their views on the subject might well have been ascertained. Meanwhile three or four hundred tool makes, millwrights, and other skilled tradesmen were employed to do the necessary work of changing over the factory.

Then came NRA with much talk about collective bargaining, increased wages, and so forth. The first thing the company knew all the employees had walked out. They were on strike, demanding an eight-hour day, a 25% increase in pay, and other things that are demanded in such cases.

This factory happens to make parts which are required in a certain other industry, and that industry demanded that they be supplied with the products from this factory. Finally under pressure to stop the strike, the president agreed to the formation of a union, lasting for a period of six months.

The strike was over - the employees came back and that time more work was available for them, because the work had been brought down from the other state. At the end of the six months, the company had to decide what to do about renewing the union agreement. The president of the company decided to throw the union out, which he proceeded to do.

#### STRIKE BROKEN

He absolutely refused to negotiate with his employees on any basis whatever. If they didn't like it they could leave. The employees refused to work under such conditions -- so they struck again. This time the president decided that he was going to open his factory with non-union employees. And if his own employees wanted to come back, they could come back under his conditions. If not, he would not have them back, agitators he would not have.

He had about 400 police around his plant to keep the picket lines in order, and to let through the workers who would work under his conditions. There was rioting and bloodshed. People were being thrown into

jail at the rate of about 40 a day. Thirty or forty people would be sent to the hospital in one afternoon. Employees and picketers and strike-breakers developed a nice turmoil.

After twenty weeks the president notified his old employees that he would give them a week to come back. Those who did not come back would not be employed by him any more. Two hundred and fifty of them came back. Then he had about 750 employees and the strike was over. He has no form of employee representation.

I have described this case because it illustrates so well the need for some means by which employees can bring their viewpoint to the attention of high officials. There is little doubt that had such means existed the loss, suffering and bloodshed caused by this struggle would have been avoided.

Goodwill on the part of a company president or high official is not sufficient. The office of the company president in this case was located in New York and he had no means of learning the view of his employees. Employees could make their needs known to the factory manager, but he was a tough individual who believed in making workmen take what conditions were offered, perhaps being forced to this position by the demands of the President for economical operation.

#### PERSONNEL MANAGER CANNOT REPRESENT EMPLOYEES

A personnel manager cannot effectively represent employees. The only method which existed in the plant was for the employees to take their troubles to the personnel man. The personnel man apparently did his best



to inform the manager as to what the employees thought. In the absence of other means, he took up the case of the employees and tried to get the situation remedied. He failed to do so.

When the employees went out on strike and proceeded to riot, the first man's house that they attacked and where they did the most damage was that of the personnel manager. He had tried to do his best for the employees, but because he failed to secure remedies for their grievances somehow or other the employees got the impression when he took their case up with the management, he had double-crossed them. So when they started to throw bricks, his was the first house they went to.

I recently read an article in which it was suggested that a personnel manager actually is in certain respects the labor leader. He takes up matters on behalf of the employees with the management - where there is no organization or even sometimes where there is an organization. This is not the right position for a personnel manager to be in.

In the above case the personnel manager earned the illwill of employees, in another case he became unpopular with management.

In a certain company in New York State where they have an employee representation plan, the employees and the management have had a sickness benefit plan, in which the employees paid a certain amount each week out of their wages toward the sickness benefit. The officials of the company in looking around to see where they could save money, found that this benefit plan was not paying for itself. The employees were not paying their share.

So at a Board of Directors meeting it was decided that the employees should pay more. The employees had been paying 85 cents a month,

it was decided that they should pay \$13.80. This was to be done without any question of the employees' permission or otherwise. The personnel director attempted to tell the Board the effect of this on the employees. He suggested that the Board of Directors should not do that without consulting the employees.

A vice-president of the company said, "No. Why do we have to talk with our employees about these things. The employees will have to pay it." By arranging meetings of the employees' committee and the management, the personnel director finally was able to arrive at a compromise in which employee contributions were raised to \$3.80, the company paying the other \$10.

That personnel director at the present time is battling for his position because he did something on the behalf of his employees which one vice-president did not like. The vice-president was promoted to a more responsible position, and is now seeking the dismissal of the personnel man.

Thus, though one could make out a good case for saying that if the personnel department understands what the employees' conditions are and brings them to the attention of the management, then there is no need for employee representation. But there are dangers in such situations, and it is really far better for employees to negotiate directly with the management. Then the personnel director stays out of a position where he is liable to be squeezed between two stones.

#### HOW TO TRAIN EMPLOYEES FOR REPRESENTATION

Returning to the company which had the strike we find at the present time no form of employee representation or organization. There are

in the organization over 500 strike-breakers, as regular employees. These people came in to break up a union, and they are all anti-organization men. It would be a most difficult job trying to get those people to work together in any form of employee organization. But a start might be made by means of bowling clubs, glee clubs, benefit associations, credit unions, or other means to mold the employees together in a group so that they could learn how to work together. This is an essential preliminary step in training employees in the art of organization and representation. Here is a place where a personnel manager can do very useful service for employees.

In talking to the president, I said, "The situation is quiet now, but what might happen if the employees became dissatisfied? Suppose the cost of living goes up and the general wage rate rises around you, what would you do?" He said, "I would have to depend on my own judgment. I hope I won't make the mistakes I made last time."

There is thus definite need in that company for some planned means by which the thoughts and ideas of the employees can be made known to the management. There might be a union, or a form of employee representation, but in view of the character of the employees neither is likely at present. Perhaps the best thing would be a form of planned group discussion by means of which ideas filter up and down through the organization.

#### PYRAMID MEETING PLAN FOR CONSULTATION

In a street railway company, (which is completely unionized), every Monday morning, the general manager has a staff meeting with the heads of his departments for discussion of policies and practices. The department



heads inform the general manager of the effect of his proposals on employees and the organization so that policies are always related to employee reactions. As soon as this meeting is over, the general superintendent of the transportation department would bring in his four or five district superintendents. He talks over with them what had been decided in the general manager's office and receives comments on expected employee reactions. Later each superintendent brings in his supervisory force, and they talk over the matters as affecting them and employees. These discussions down the line are reported back to the general manager through the regular meetings.

These discussions of superintendents and supervisor bring out very well what employees think about their working conditions, about their wages, and about operating conditions within the company.

Wherever there is any unsatisfactory condition, where the employees are dissatisfied with their supervisor, or with the way the schedule is laid out, or with their hours or the assignment of their work, complaints of employees' work and employees' complaints of management organization and planning have a means of being aired.

This is not employee representation in the ordinary sense in which we speak of it, but, I think that by this means you can get the employee viewpoint. This will make for efficiency in organization, will bring to the attention of the higher officials any dissatisfactions that there are, and generally under certain circumstances is an excellent form of set-up. It would seem at present to be the best machinery for employee representation for the company which had the strike. The personnel manager would do well to spend his time building a set-up of that description, rather

than putting himself in between the men and the management. Any employee representation requires management if it is to be in the best interest of employees.

#### PERSONNEL POLICY CAUSES DIFFICULTIES

The personnel manager of a charity organization came to see me a few weeks ago because of difficulties in the organization. Apparently they had a workers' council, and she wanted to know what she should do in the light of employees' demand for increased pay.

A 10 percent cut in pay had been restored last year, and this year the worker's council are again asking for more pay. The employees were told that down in Wall Street and in the banks employees had received no increases. Their reply was that their employers were a charity organization, which had to take into consideration human feelings. The employees council used many arguments of this sort at all times. This view seriously affected discipline and work. Consequently they were having problems of absenteeism, standards of work in the organization were low and the employee morale was bad.

Certain personnel policies really created the difficulties with the workers' organization. And the problems could not be solved so long as those matters of policy existed.

There were two things, (a) it was the policy in the organization to pay above the rates in the community for equal work, and (b) girls who married continued to work, and there was no labor turnover. After a girl was hired she received her raise of \$2 every year or six months, until she reached the top of her scale. Then, she could go no further. There being

no room for promotion in the organization, because of the second point I mentioned, and her salary scale being already above the rates in the community, she must continue in the same job, sit doing the same work, and yet wanting more money, because of a natural desire for promotion and advancement.

The employer, in this case the charity organization, was as liberal as possible, but the two faults in personnel policy made employee dissatisfaction inevitable, no matter how liberal they were. The situation could be improved only by changing these two personnel policies.

There was no chance for promotion in the organization and the girls could not go outside without taking a loss. The Board of Directors of the charity organization did not analyze the situation. They could not continue to give the employees raises and promotions such as they knew employees were getting in other organizations, for they were already paying high wages. Furthermore they believed the money taken into the organization should be spend as much as possible on poor people and not on the employees in the organization.

This case shows how if you have an employee organization and the employees are not satisfied with conditions, with their wages or working conditions, some times it is not due to any hard-heartedness on the part of the management of the business but to some situation which has been created by general policy. This shows that if you have an employee organization, you have to have somebody to manage it. For instance, if the personnel manager, who came in to see me, had seen what the real cause of the trouble was, had it explained to the workers' council, and asked them



to decide, whether girls who married should be separated from the organization, whether new girls should be hired at going rates for the community, or in what other ways they would like the organization opened up for promotions and advancement, then the representatives of the employees could intelligently decide what they wanted. No positive recommendations from the employees, as to how to settle the problem, could be expected without prior analysis by the personnel manager.

### FEW CONSTRUCTIVE CONTRIBUTIONS

Employee organizations do not make significant constructive contributions to management. This last example illustrates something which is commonly found in employee organizations and that is, that employees will bring pressure for improvement of their own immediate conditions, but most of the time, they have not a sufficient grasp or understanding of the problem to themselves make any constructive contributions to a solution of the difficulties they want corrected.

Another example may be taken from the railroads, the work in the B & O by Otto Beyer, involving employee-employer cooperation. Some years ago the employees of the B & O were very much dissatisfied, and in some of the repair shops there was serious trouble with the men. Beyer after analyzing the situation persuaded the management to agree to employee-employer cooperation, by which the employees would make suggestions for improvement and economies in operation, particularly in the repair shops. In return for this employee aid the B & O agreed to have repair work done in their own shops, instead of its being done elsewhere.

While the employees were very good at suggesting minor improvements in methods of work, they made no suggestions for the improvement of policies.

One thing the employees helped to solve was the matter of their tools. The employees had to walk long distances to get their tools, and as they worked on piece rates this caused them to lose money. Also because it took them a longer time to repair an engine, or whatever they were doing, the cost of repairs was high. So a tool rack was built so that the employees could reach for their tools easily. Again instead of employees having to move the heavy parts of machinery by main force, they developed pulleys, levers, and hoists for the quicker moving of those parts.

The best example of broad employee cooperation that there has ever been has been in the work of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers in Chicago under Sidney Hillman, with the assistance of people of the brain-trust order like Leo Wolman, William Leiserson, and Earl Dean Howard. But generally employees do not make significant contributions, except under the stimulation and encouragement of personnel manager or his equivalent.

#### SUMMARY

Summarizing the points brought out in regard to employee representation in industry, we have seen, how a strike may develop through failure to consult employees on matters that vitally concern them, how a personnel department is not an effective means of bringing employee views to higher officials, and how the personnel department may assist, through organizing of planned conferences, in training employees to work together, in analyzing personnel problems for the consideration of employee committees and in stimulating organized employee cooperation.

Now, instead of continuing to address you and taking up these matters with special reference to the government service, with your permission I suggest that we open the meeting for discussion. I will attempt to answer questions you may care to put. Are there any questions?

#### DISCUSSION - REPRESENTATION IN THE GOVERNMENT SERVICE

##### Question:

We have in the Department of Agriculture several groups throughout the classified service. There are employee unions, the A.F.G.E. and the N.F.F.E., and also we have recreation groups, the purpose of which it is to provide means of recreation, and sports, for employees. We have another group, probably to be classified under "welfare", for the Welfare Association runs a cafeteria and a store, and we have a credit union, and an insurance union, and then there's a group of miscellaneous organizations such as the American Legion - that's roughly the background of what we have here. With those groups, and from Government employees in general, do you think we might be able to offer more constructive suggestions to the management than employee groups have in industry?

##### Answer:

It is entirely possible that this could be done, but most industrial situations involve some sort of bargaining. The only way in which employees can be stimulated to give constructive suggestions is where it will lead to their advantage, as with the B & O and of course with the clothing workers. With the B & O the bargain was that if the employees would make positive suggestions and increase the efficiency of the shops, the B & O which had been having work performed outside of the



shops would cease having the engines repaired outside and have them repaired by the men inside. The employees could get an increase of employment in that way. The Hart, Schaffner & Marx situation in Chicago was largely the same. There they had inside shops and outside shops.

If there is any strong motivation for employees to offer constructive suggestions, they would undoubtedly do so. Of course, there would have to be on the part of the higher officials a definite request for them, and then employees might start making them. They would try. It would all depend on what degree of success they had with their trial just how far they would go. How far it has taken place in the post office, I don't know. But, I think it is very closely related to the immediate welfare of employees.

I think you might start to establish or develop a suggestion system. If Congress, let us say, should attempt to reduce your budget, without due regard for efficiency and the continuance of essential functions, then, through your organized groups, you might tell the head of your department you will take the steps necessary to increase efficiency, and will make constructive suggestions for the improvement of the service, if he will (say) make recommendations to Congress to permit the retention of certain divisions.

It would, however, be absolutely necessary that your organization could convince employees that it would be to their advantage to join and help in this work and not to their disadvantage. But I doubt whether employee positive suggestions for the benefit of the department could be obtained except on some such strong motivation.

Statement from the floor

Employee representation in the Government takes an entirely different slant. In the first place, the largest weapon of an industrial organization is lost here. That is the strike. It is practically impossible to strike in the Government. There have been one or two conducted by employee organizations, but those are very rare and generally looked down upon. The strongest organization in Washington is the N.F.F.E. This also is the strongest in the field. It is connected with the A.F. of L., and therefore carries some of the Federation's policies down. However, for the most part it works not like industrial unions, but like a lobby, and has its representative in Congress. The best that the employees could hope for would be that the union should be recognized in a particular branch in which they work. In some organizations, the officials look down upon the union and in other organizations they have practically no unions.

Question:

According to the Government Standard, which is the official publication of the Government unions, in some places where there are 3,000 employees, there are only about 20 who are members of the union. In other places almost all employees are members.

Certain things have been done by the unions, such as reinstatement in cases where employees have been fired for union activity rather than for inefficiency, and getting raises for other employees. But for the most part they cannot interfere in policy because this is not an industrial organization, and they are practically forbidden to adopt the same methods as may be taken by an industrial union. Furthermore employee's suggestions are not encouraged.

I should like to have some suggestion as to how an employee organization might be able to get recognition, as the employees in a particular place may feel the need for a union and to have the Administration accept their suggestions.

Answer:

If you have 3000 employees in a Government department and you have only 90 employees in the union, those 90 are going to be regarded, by comparison with the others, as agitators and receive no recognition. If you can increase that number from 90 up to 1000 or so, then there is no question but that they will be recognized, and their recommendations taken into consideration. The answer is to increase the organization from 90 up to 1000 or whatever the required minimum may be.

Question:

There is quite a flare on the part of the employees who take an active part.

Answer:

Is there any real grievance or set of grievances which the employees have as a whole?

Question:

The A.F.G.E. is working, or has worked on the 26 day leave bill, and is now working on the five-day week. These matters are of particular interest to employees.

Answer:

Those may be matters of interest, or something which employees would like to have, but are they something that the employees of the department cannot do without? Are there questions of dismissal or



discrimination, or grievances that really excite employees, matters which they are really concerned about. If there were, there is no doubt that their sense of grievance would overcome their fear, or indifference.

Organizing, and increasing union memberships are not matters which can be handled in a short space of time. If your Federal unions want to increase their strength, they should pick out sections or departments where there are real grievances. That is to say, they should go into places that are easiest to organize rather than go into places just because there happen to be few members there.

If you have a department where you have failed to organize because the employees are afraid, or indifferent, unless it is a real sore spot as far as all or most employees are concerned, it would seem best to leave it alone. You may not like the idea that employees will not join because they are afraid of what will happen if they do or do not care about joining, but employees of that type will not make good union members anyway.

Question:

Is the success of the unions due to gaining things for the employees? If it is, and the unions get what the employees want, then will they not pass out of existence because there will be no more motivation.

Answer:

You ask, if when the unions have secured benefits for employees, will they not fall through?

Question:

Wouldn't it take a very high type of motivation to bring the members in, after they have secured what they want. The unions would go out of existence, because the members no longer have any motivation.

Answer:

That's one of the difficulties of unions. It isn't only the question of getting members, but there is also the question of keeping them. I think that this is one of the reasons why Mr. Green is opposing Mr. Lewis in the question of the industrial unions. Mr. Lewis may be able to bring in large numbers of members to the unions, but inexperienced men do not know how to negotiate and do not know what to work for. They often ask for things that are unreasonable, often handicap the industry thereby, and then drop their memberships. If unionism is built on a sound basis, there are continuing improvements that the unions can secure for the employees.

In the development of social programs and the liberalization of attitudes of management toward employees, unions have done much. Vacations with pay which employers are now giving employees all over the country, the five day week, better health conditions, etc., all have come through continued pressure of unions.

Statement from the floor:

In the Government Service, there is no clear line of demarcation between management and employee, so that representation cannot be established except as between the legislative branch of the Government itself and the subordinate officials. The problems are shared in common with the highest chief who therefore wishes to be represented with the employees.



Answer:

There's a book here which you may be interested in --- it is called "Personnel Problems of the Federal Civil Service" by Feldman, published in 1931, by the Government Printing Office. He discusses Whitley councils in the British Civil Service and what they have done; and group representation in the post office, particularly the post office service councils. These councils are comparable to the Personnel Department in some respects. Representatives of the postal unions and representatives of officials sit down together and make recommendations. I understand that this system has been discontinued since the present Administration came in, and the matter of the employees' welfare is now handled by the separate unions.

Feldman discusses the difficulties of organization of employee representation in the classified services. He points out that the most important factor in the post office organization is that it is under a single head, while the other departments are not. They are independent establishments, often in small units, knowing and caring little about each other's problems, and it is hard to get them together.

Feldman suggests that, in the development of employee representation in Government departments, a start should be made in a department or section of a department, where the limiting conditions are at a minimum, and where there is a maximum of unified organization. When that is done and experience gained under the most successful circumstances, then it can be tried, with modifications, where there are some difficulties, as there will be in other departments.

He also suggests cooperation and meetings in which personnel men from different departments, or perhaps employee representatives, in



different departments sit down and talk over their common problems, and see how they can together work out improvements in the service. Informal exchanges of experiences of this type are preliminary steps in the formation of organizations. Unless there are in the Government service personnel men capable of handling employee organizations, it is not wise, in the interest of the Service or in the interest of employees that any movement should go ahead too fast.

Question:

In the situation where there were 3000 employees and only 90 members, where it seemed that nobody cared, where there was no opposition to the formation of a union, but nobody was interested, should the management or the employees themselves be concerned with a situation of that sort?

Answer:

I should like to think that someone would take the necessary steps to ascertain employee views. But unless some high official understands the importance of the problem, and wants to do something about it, I think it has to come from the employees.

Question:

Do you think that the management could do something about organizing the employees in some fashion?

Answer:

I wouldn't use the word "organizing". If a start is made with a type of pyramiding group consultation, rather than group representation, then by means of that plan you develop a consultative basis. Later you



decide whether you want to go further in the matter of employee organization.

Question:

Isn't the difficulty of organization at the present time due to the fact that many employees are at an age level where they have come into the service before there were organizations, and most of them have not cared to join organizations since. They are not organization-conscious and have never felt the value of an organization to them. While they do know some of the benefits of some of these organizations, they do not realize the advantage of becoming members.

Answer:

It would be necessary to study the present age levels in order to answer that question.

Question:

In the Joesphine Roche organization (the Rocky Mountain Fuel and Iron Co.) she told her employees to form an organization. They had not been members of one before because they had been forbidden to have one. But they did organize, the management and the employees worked out a means of handling problems jointly. But first they were told to get an organization.

Answer:

Hays seems to have done the same thing, when the post office formed service councils or service groups.

